POTASH AND PERLMUTTER SETTLE THINGS

Montague Glass

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Books by

MONTAGUE GLASS

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WORRYING WON'T WIN

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"he gives himself dead away by getting sore."
ALBERT LEVERING

POTASH AND PERLMUTTER SETTLE THINGS

by

MONTAGUE GLASS

Author of
"Worrying Won't Win"

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POTASH AND PERLMUTTER SETTLE THINGS

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I

THEY ARRIVE, AND SO DOES THE PRESIDENT

"NU, what's the matter *now?*" Morris Perlmutter asked, as he entered the office one morning after the cessation of hostilities on the western front.

"*Ai, tzuris!*" Abe moaned in reply, and for at least a minute he continued to rock to and fro in his chair and to make incoherent noises through his nostrils in the manner of a person suffering either from toothache or the recent cancelation of a large order.

"It serves you right," Morris said. "I told you you shouldn't eat that liberty roast at Wasserbauer's yesterday. It used to give you the indigestion when it was known as *Koenigsburger Klops*, which it is like the German Empire now calling itself the German Republic; changing its name ain't going to alter its poisonous disposition none."

"That's right!" Abe said. "Make jokes, why don't you? You are worser as this here feller Zero."

"What feller Zero?" Morris demanded.

"Zero the emperor what fiddled when Rome was burning," Abe replied. "He's got nothing on you. *You* would fiddle if Rome, Watertown, and Ogdensburg was burning."

"I don't know what you are talking about at all," Morris said. "And, besides, the feller's name was Nero, not Zero."

"That's what you say," Abe commented, "which you also said that the operators was only bluffing and that they wouldn't strike on us in a thousand years, and considering that you said this only yesterday, Mawruss, it's already wonderful how time flies."

"Well," Morris said, "how could I figure that them lunatics is going to pick out the time when we've got practically no work for them and was going to fire them, anyway, to call a strike on us?"

"You should *ought* to have figured that way," Abe declared. "Didn't the Kaiser abdicate just before them Germans got ready to kick him out?"

"The king business ain't the garment business," Morris observed.

"I know it ain't," Abe agreed. "Kings has got their worries, too, but when it comes to laying awake nights trying to figure out whether them designers somewheres in France is going to turn out long, full skirts or short, narrow skirts for the

fall and winter of nineteen-nineteen and nineteen-twenty, Mawruss, I bet yer the entire collection of kings, active or retired, doesn't got to take two grains of trional between them."

"If everybody worried like *you* do, Abe," Morris said, "the government would got to issue sleeping-powder cards like sugar cards and limit the consumption of sleeping-powders to not more than two pounds of sleeping-powders per person per month in each household."

"Well, some one has got to do the worrying around here, Mawruss," Abe said, "which if it rested with you, y'understand, we could make up a line of samples for next season that wouldn't be no more like Paris designs than General Pershing looks like his pictures in the magazines."

"Say, for that matter," Morris said, "we are just as good guessers as our competitors; on account the way things is going nowadays, nobody is going to try to make a trip to Paris to get fashion designs, because if he figured on crossing the ocean to buy model gowns for the fall and winter of nineteen-nineteen and nineteen-twenty, y'understand, between the time that he applied for his passport and the time the government issued it to him, y'understand, it would already be the spring and summer season of nineteen-twenty-four and nineteen-twenty-five. So the best thing we could do is to snoop round among the trade, and whatever we find the majority is making up for next year, we would make up the same styles also, and that's all there would be *to* it."

"We wouldn't do nothing of the kind," Abe declared. "I've been thinking this thing over, and I come to the conclusion that it's up to you to go over to Paris and see what is going on over there."

"I don't got to go to Paris for that, Abe," Morris said. "I can read the papers the same like anybody else, and just so long as there is a chance that the war would start up again and them hundred-mile guns is going to resume operations, I am content to get my ideas of Paris styles at a distance of three thousand miles if I never sold another garment as long as I live."

"But when it *was* working yet, it only went off every twenty minutes," Abe said.

"I don't care if it went off every Fourth of July," Morris said, "because if I went over there it would be just my luck that the peace nogotiations falls through and the Germans invent a gun leaving Frankfort ever hour on the hour and arriving in Paris daily, including Sundays, without leaving enough trace of me to file a proof of death with. Am I right or wrong?"

"All right," Abe said. "If *that's* the way you feel about it, *I* will go to Paris."

"*You* will go to Paris?" Morris exclaimed.

"Sure!" Abe declared. "The operators is on strike, business is rotten, and I'm sick and tired of paying life-insurance premiums, *anyway*. Besides, if Leon Sammet could get a passport, why couldn't I?"

"You mean to say that faker is going to Paris to buy model gowns?" Morris demanded.

"I seen him on the Subway this morning, and the way he talked about how easy he got his passport, you would think that every time he was in Washington with a line of them masquerade costumes which Sammet Brothers makes up, if he didn't stop in and take anyhow a bit of lunch with the Wilsons, y'understand, the President raises the devil with Tumulty why didn't he let him *know* Leon Sammet was in town."

"Then that settles it," Morris declared, reaching for his hat.

"Where are you going?" Abe asked.

"I am going straight down to see Henry D. Feldman and tell that crook he should get for me a passport," Morris said.

"You wouldn't positively do nothing of the kind," Abe said. "Did you ever hear the like? Wants to go to a lawyer to get a passport! An idea!"

"Well, who would I go to, then—an osteaopath?" Morris asked.

"Leon Sammet told me all about it," Abe said. "You go down to a place on Rector Street where you sign an application, and—"

"That's just what I thought," Morris interrupted, "and the least what happens to fellers which signs applications without a lawyer, y'understand, is that six months later a truck-driver arrives one morning and says where should he leave the set of Washington Irving in one hundred and fifty-six volumes or the piano with stool and scarf complete, as the case may be. So I am

going to see Feldman, and if it costs me fifteen or twenty dollars, it's anyhow a satisfaction to know that when you do things with the advice of a smart crooked lawyer, nobody could put nothing over on you outside of your lawyer."

When Morris returned an hour later, however, instead of an appearance of satisfaction, his face bore so melancholy an expression that for a few minutes Abe was afraid to question him.

"*Nu!*" he said at last. "I suppose you got turned down for being overweight or something?"

"What do you mean—overweight?" Morris demanded. "What do you suppose I am applying for—a twenty-year endowment passport or one of them tontine passports with cash surrender value after three years?"

"Then what is the matter you look so *rachmonos?*" Abe said.

"How *should* I look with the kind of partner which I've got it?" Morris asked. "Paris models he must got to got. Domestic designs ain't good enough for him. Such high-grade idees he's got, and I've got to suffer for it yet."

"Well, *don't* go to Europe. What do *I* care?" Abe said.

"*We* must go," Morris replied.

"What do you mean—we?" Abe demanded.

"I mean you and me," Morris said. "Feldman says that just so long as it is one operation he would charge the same for getting one passport as for getting two, excepting the government fee of two dollars. So what do you think—I am

going to pay Henry D. Feldman two hundred dollars for getting me a passport when for two dollars extra I can get one for you also?"

"But who is going to look after the store?" Abe exclaimed.

"Say!" Morris retorted, "you've got relations *enough* working around here, which every time you've hired a fresh one, you've given me this blood-is-redder-than-water stuff, and now is your chance to prove it. We wouldn't be away longer as six weeks at the outside, so go ahead, Abe. Here is the application for the passport. Sign your name on the dotted line and don't say no more about it."

"Yes, Mawruss," Abe said, three weeks later, as they sat in the restaurant of their Paris hotel, "in a country where the coffee pretty near strangles you, even when it's got cream and sugar in it, y'understand, the cooking has *got* to be good, because in a two-dollar-a-day American plan hotel the management figures that no matter how rotten the food is, the guests will say, 'Well, anyhow, the coffee was good,' and get by with it *that* way."

"On the other hand, Abe," Morris suggested, "maybe the French hotel people figure that if they only make the coffee bad enough, the guests would say, 'Well, one good thing, while the food is terrible, it ain't a marker on the coffee.'"

"But the food tastes pretty good to me, Mawruss," Abe said.

"Wait till you've been here a week, Abe," Morris advised him. "Anything would taste good to you after what you went through on that boat."

"What do you mean—after what *I* went through?" Abe demanded. "What I went through don't begin to compare with what you went through, which honestly, Mawruss, there was times there on that second day out where you acted so terrible, understand me, that rather as witness such human suffering again, if any one would of really and truly had your interests at heart, they would of give a couple of dollars to a steward that he should throw you overboard and make an end of your misery."

"Is *that* so!" Morris retorted. "Well, let me tell you something, Abe. If you think *I* was in a bad way, don't kid yourself, when you lay there in your berth for three days without strength enough to take off even your collar and necktie, y'understand, that the captain said to the first officer ain't it wonderful what an elegant sailor that Mr. Potash is or anything *like* it, understand me, which on more than one occasion when I seen the way you looked, Abe, I couldn't help thinking of what chances concerns like the Equi*tta*ble takes when they pass a feller as A number one on his heart and kidneys, and ain't tried him out on so much as a Staten Island ferry-boat to see what kind of a traveler he is."

"Listen, Mawruss," Abe interrupted, "did we come over here paying first-class fares for prac-

tically steerage accommodations to discuss life insurance, or did we come over here to buy model garments and get through with it, because believe me, it is no pleasure for me to stick around a country where you couldn't get no sugar or butter in a hotel, not if you was to show the head waiter a doctor's certificate with a hundred-dollar bill pinned on it. So let us go round to a few of these high-grade dressmakers and see how much we are going to get stuck for, and have it over with."

Accordingly, they paid for the coffee and milk without sugar and the dark sour rolls without butter which nowadays form the usual hotel breakfast in France, and set out for the office of the commission agent whose place of business is the rendezvous for American garment-manufacturers in search of Parisian model gowns. The broad avenues in the vicinity of the hotel seemed unusually crowded even to people as accustomed to the congested traffic of lower Fifth Avenue as Abe and Morris were, but as they proceeded toward the wholesale district of Paris the streets became less and less traveled, until at length they walked along practically deserted thoroughfares.

"And we thought business was rotten in America," Morris said. "Why, there ain't hardly one store open, hardly."

Abe nodded gloomily.

"It looks to me, Mawruss, that if there is any new garments being designed over here," he said, "they would be quiet morning gowns appropriate

for attending something informal like a sale by a receiver in supplementary proceedings, or a more or less elaborate afternoon costume, not too showy, y'understand, but the kind of model that a fashionable Paris dressmaker could wear to a referee in bankruptcy's office so as not to make the attending creditors say she was her own best customer, understand me."

"Well, what could you expect?" Morris said, as they toiled up the stairs to the commission agent's office. "The chances is that up to a couple of months ago, in a Paris dressmaker's shop, a customer arrived only every other week, whereas a nine-inch bomb arrived every twenty minutes, and furthermore, Abe, it was *you* that suggested this trip, not *me*, so now that we are over here, we should ought to make the best of it, and if this here commission agent can't show us no new designs, he could, anyhow, show us the sights."

But even this consolation was denied them, for when they reached the commission agent's door it was locked and barred, as were all the other offices on that floor, and bore a placard reading:

FERME

Â Cause du Jour de Fête

"*Nu!*" Morris said, after he had read and reread the notice a number of times, "what are we going to do *now?*"

"This is the last hair," Abe said, "because you know how it is with these Frenchers, if they close for a death in the family, it is liable to be a matter of weeks already."

"Maybe it says gone to lunch, will be back in half an hour," Morris suggested, hopefully.

"Not a chance," Abe declared. "More likely it means this elegant office with every modern improvement except an elevator, steam heat, and electric light, to be sublet, because it would be just our luck that the commission agent is back in New York right now with a line of brand-new model gowns, asking our bookkeeper will either of the bosses be back soon."

"We wouldn't get back in ten years, I'll tell you that, unless we hustle," Morris declared. He led the way down-stairs to the ground floor, where, after a few minutes, they managed to attract the attention of the *concierge*, who emerged from her shelter at the foot of the stairs and in rapid French explained to Abe and Morris that all Paris was celebrating with a public holiday the arrival of President Wilson.

"It's a funny thing about the French language," Morris said, as she concluded. "Even if you don't understand what the people mean, you could 'most always tell what they've been eating, which if the French people was limited by law to a ton of garlic a month per person, Abe, this lady would go to jail for the rest of her life."

"*Attendez!*" said the *concierge*. "*Au dessus il yà un monsieur qui parle anglais.*"

She motioned for them to wait and ascended the stairs to the floor above, where they heard her knock on an office door. Evidently the person who opened it was annoyed by the interruption, for his voice—and to Abe and Morris it was a strangely familiar voice—was raised in angry protest.

"Now listen," said the tenant, "I told you before that I've only got this place temporarily, and as long as I am in here I don't want you to do no cleaning nor nothing, because the air is none too good here as it is, and furthermore—"

He proceeded no farther, however, for Abe and Morris had taken the stairs three at a jump and began to wring his hands effusively upon the principle of any port in a storm.

"Well, well, well, if it ain't Leon Sammet!" Abe cried, and his manner was as cordial as though, instead of their nearest competitor, Leon were Potash & Perlmutter's best customer.

"The English language bounces off of that woman like water from a duck's neck," Leon said, "which every five minutes she comes up here and talks to me in French high speed with the throttle wide open like a racing-car already."

"And the exhaust must be something terrible," Abe said.

"I am nearly frozen from opening the windows to let out her conversation," Leon said, "and especially this morning, when I thought I could get a lot of letter-writing done without being interrupted, on account of the holiday."

"So that's the reason why everything is closed up!" Morris exclaimed.

"But Christmas ain't for pretty near two weeks yet," Abe said.

"What has Christmas got to do with it?" Leon retorted. "To-day is a holiday because President Wilson arrives in Paris."

"And you are working here?" Abe cried.

"Why not?" Leon asked.

"You mean to say that President Wilson is arriving in Paris to-day and you ain't going to see him come in?" Morris exclaimed. "What for an American are you, anyway?"

"Say, for that matter, President Wilson has been arriving in New York hundreds of times in the past four years," Leon said, "and I 'ain't heard that you boys was on the reception committee exactly."

"That's something else again," Abe said. "In New York we've got business *enough* to do without fooling away our time rubbering at parades, but President Wilson only comes to Paris once in a lifetime."

"And some of the people back home is kicking because he comes to Paris even *that* often," Leon commented.

"*Let* 'em kick," Morris declared, "which the way some Americans runs down President Wilson only goes to show that it's an old saying and a true one that there is no profit for a man in his own country, so go ahead and write your letters if you want to, Leon, but Abe and me is going

down-town to the Champs Elizas and give the President a couple of cheers like patriotic American sitsons should ought to do."

"In especially," Abe added, "as it is a legal holiday and we wouldn't look at no model garments to-day."

II

SETTLING THE PRELIMINARIES

"AFTER all, Mawruss," Abe Potash said, as he sat with his partner, Morris Perlmutter, in their hotel room on the night after the President's arrival in Paris, "a President is only human, and it seems to me that if they would of given him a chance to go quietly to a hotel and wash up after the trip, y'understand, it would be a whole lot better as meeting him at the railroad depot and starting right in with the speeches."

"What do you mean—give him a chance to wash up?" Morris asked. "Don't you suppose he had a chance to wash up on the train, or do you think him and Mrs. Wilson sat up all night in a day-coach?"

"I don't care if they had a whole section," Abe retorted; "it ain't the easiest thing in the world to step off a train in a stovepipe hat, with a clean shave, after a twenty-hour trip, even if it would of been one of them eighteen-hour limiteds even, and begin right away to get off a lot of *schmooes* about he don't know how to express the surprise and gratification he feels at such an enthusiastic reception, in especially as he probably lay awake half the night trying to memorize the bigger part

of the speech following the words, 'and now, gentlemen, I wouldn't delay you no longer.' So that's why I say if they would have let him go to his hotel first, y'understand, why, then he—"

"But Mr. and Mrs. Wilson ain't putting up at no hotel. They are staying with a family by the name of Murat," Morris explained.

"Relations to the Wilsons maybe?" Abe inquired.

"Not that I heard tell of," Morris replied.

"Well, whoever they are they've got my sympathy," Abe said; "because once, when the Independent Order Mattai Aaron held its annual Grand Lodge meeting in New York, me and Rosie put up the Grand Master, by the name Louis M. Koppelman, used to was Koppelman & Fine, the Fashion Store, Pottstown, Pennsylvania, and the way that feller turned the house upside down, if he would have stayed another week with us, understand me, I would have hired a first-class A number one criminal lawyer to defend me and wired the relations for instructions as to how to ship the body home."

"I bet yer the Murats feel honored to got Mr. and Mrs. Wilson staying with them," Morris said.

"For the first few days maybe," Abe admitted, "but wait till a couple weeks go by! I give them until January 1, 1919, and after that Mr. and Mrs. Murat would be signaling each other to come up-stairs into the maid's room and be holding a few ain't-them-people-got-no-home conversations. Also, Mawruss, for the rest of their married life,

Mawruss, every time the tropic of who invited them in the FIRST place comes up at meal-times, y'understand, either Mr. or Mrs. Murat is going to get up from the table and lock themselves up in the bedroom for the remainder of the evening. Am I right or wrong?"

"I wouldn't argue with you," Morris said, "because if I would give you the slightest encouragement you are liable to go to work and figure where Mrs. Murat is kicking to Mr. Murat that she couldn't make out with the housekeeping money while the Wilsons is in Paris, on account of having to buy an extra bottle of Grade B milk every day, or something like that, which you talk like Mr. and Mrs. Wilson was in Paris on a couple of weeks' vacation, whereas the President has come here to settle the peace of the world."

"Did I say he didn't?" Abe protested.

"And while you are sitting here talking a lot of nonsense," Morris went on, "big things is happening, which with all the questions he has got to think about, I bet yer the President *oser* worries his head about a little affair like board and lodging. Also I read in one of them Paris editions of an American paper that there come over to France on the same steamer with him over three hundred experts—college professors and the like—and them fellers is now staying in Paris at various hotels, which, if that don't justify Mr. Wilson in putting up with a private family, y'understand, I don't know what does!"

"I thought at the time I read about them

experts coming over to help the President in the Peace Conference that he was letting himself in for something," Abe observed.

"I bet yer!" Morris said. "And that's where Colonel House was wise when he comes over on a steamer ahead of them, because it is bad enough when you are crossing the ocean in winter-time to be President of the United States and to have to try not to act otherwise, without having three hundred experts dogging your footsteps and thinking up ways to start a conversation and swing it towards the subject they are experts in. Which I bet yer every time the President tried to get a little exercise by walking around the promenade deck after lunch there was an expert on Jugo-Slobs laying for him who was all worked up to tell everything he knew about Jugo-Slobs in a couple of laps, provided the President lasted that long."

"Well, I'll tell you," Abe said, "a man which employs experts to ask advice from deserves all he gets, Mawruss, because you know how it is when you ask an advice from somebody which don't know a thing in the world about what he is advising you. He'll talk you deaf, dumb, and blind, anyhow. So you can imagine what it must be like when you are getting advice from an expert!"

"It seems to me that before the President gets through he will be looking around for an expert which is expert in choking off advice from experts, otherwise the first time the President consults

one of them experts, if he's going to wait for the expert to get through, he will have to be elected to a third term and then maybe hold over, at that," Morris commented.

"I should think the President would be glad when this Peace Conference is over," Abe said.

"Say! For that matter he'll be glad when it's started," Morris said. "Which the way it looks now, Abe, the preliminaries of a peace conference is harder on a President in the way of speeches and parades than two Liberty Loan campaigns and an inauguration. Take, for instance, the matter of dinners, and I bet yer before he even goes to London next week he would have six meals with the President of France alone—I can't remember his name."

"Call him Lefkowitz," Abe said· "I'll know who you mean."

"Well, whatever it is, he looks like a hearty eater, Abe," Morris remarked.

"In fact, Mawruss, from what I seen of them French politicians in the parade this morning," Abe observed, "none of them looked like they went slow on starchy foods and red meats, whereas take the American Peace Commissioners, from the President down, and while they don't all of them give you the impression that they eat breakfast food for dinner exactly, still at the same time if these here peace preliminaries is going to include more dinners than parades, the French Commissioners has got them under a big handicap."

"Maybe you're right," Morris agreed. "But

my idee is that with these here preliminary peace dinners it ain't such a bad thing for us if our Peace Commissioners wouldn't be such hearty eaters, y'understand, because you know how it is when we've got a hard-boiled egg come into the place to look over our line, it's a whole lot better to get an idee of about how much he expects to buy after lunch than before, in especially if we pay for the lunch. So if this here President Lefkowitz, or whatever the feller's name is, expects to fill up the President with a big meal of them French *à la* dishes until Mr. Wilson gets so good-natured that he is willing to tell not only his life history, but also just exactly what he means by a League of Nations, y'understand, the dinner might just as well start and end with two poached eggs on toast, for all the good it will do."

"Still, it ain't a bad idee to have all these dinners over and done with before the business of the Peace Conference begins, Mawruss," Abe remarked, "because hafterwards, when Mr. Wilson's attitude on some of them fourteen propositions for peace becomes known, y'understand, it ain't going to be too pleasant for Mrs. Wilson to be sitting by the side of her husband and watch the looks of some of the guests sitting opposite during the fish course, for instance, not wishing him no harm, but waiting for a good-sized bone to lodge sideways in his throat, or something."

"She is used to that from home already, whenever she has a few Republican Senators to dinner

at the White House," Morris said. "But that ain't here nor there, anyhow, because after the Peace Conference begins the President will be so busy, y'understand, that sending out one of the Assistant Secretaries of State to a Busy Bee lunchroom to bring him a couple of sandwiches and some coffee will be the nearest to a formal dinner that the President will come to for many a day. Take, for instance, the proposition of the Freedom of the Seas, and there's a whole lot to be said on both sides by people like yourself which don't know one side from the other."

"And I don't want to know, neither," Abe said, "because it wouldn't make no difference to me how free the seas was made, once I get back on terra cotta, Mawruss; they could not only make the seas free, y'understand, but they could also offer big bonuses in addition, and I wouldn't leave America again not if they was to give me a life pass good on the *Olympic* or *Aquitania* with meals included."

"So your idea is that the freedom of the seas means traveling for nothing on ocean steamers?" Morris commented.

"Say!" Abe retorted, "why should I bother my head what such things mean when I got for a partner a feller which really by rights belongs down at the Peace headquarters, along with them other big experts?"

"I never claimed to be an expert, but at the same time, I ain't an ignerammus, neither, which even before I left New York, I knew all about

this here Freedom of the Seas," Morris said, "which the day before we sailed I was talking to Henry Binder, of Binder & Baum, and he says to me—"

"Excuse me, but what does Binder & Baum know about the Freedom of the Seas?" Abe demanded. "They are in the wholesale pants business, ain't it?"

"Sure, I know," Morris continued, "and Paderewski is a piano-player, and at the same time he went over to Poland to organize the new Polish Republic."

"And the result will be that when the new Polish Republic gets started under the direction of this here piano-player," Abe said, "and they get a new Polish National Anthem, it will be an expert piano-player's idea of something which is easy to play, and the consequence is that until the next Polish revolution, every time a band plays the Polish National Anthem, them poor Polacks would got to stand up for from forty-five minutes to an hour while the band struggles to get through with what it would have taken Paderewski three minutes at the outside."

"Henry Binder is a college graduate even if he would be in the pants business," Morris said, "and he said to me: 'Perlmutter,' he said, 'the Freedom of the Seas is like this,' he says. 'You take a country like Norway and it stands in the same relation to the big naval powers like we would to the other big manufacturers. Now, for instance,' he says, 'last year we did a business of over two million dollars, and—'"

Abe raised his right hand like a traffic policeman.

"Stop right there, Mawruss," he said, "because if the Freedom of the Seas is anything like Binder & Baum doing a business of two million dollars last year, I don't believe a word of it, which it wouldn't make no difference if Henry Binder was talking about the Freedom of the Seas or astronomy, sooner or later he is bound to ring in the large amount of goods he is selling, and, anyway, no matter what Henry Binder tells you, you must got to reckon ninety-eight per cent. discount before you could believe a word he says."

"And do you suppose for one moment that the members of the Peace Conference is going to act any different from Henry Binder in that respect?" Morris asked. "Every one of the representatives of the countries engaged in this here Peace Conference is coming to France with a statement of the very least they would accept, and it is pretty generally understood that all such statements are subject to a very stiff discount, which that is what these here preliminaries is for, Abe —to get a line on the discounts before the Peace Conference discusses the claims themselves."

"Well, when it comes to the Allies scrapping between themselves about League of Nations and Freedoms of Seas, I am content that they should be allowed a liberal discount on what they say for what they mean, Mawruss, but when it comes to Germany," he concluded, "she's got to pay, and pay in full, net cash, and then some."

III

THE PRESIDENT'S VISIT TO ENGLAND

"THE alphabet ain't what it used to be before the war, Mawruss," Abe said, as he read the paper at breakfast in his Paris hotel shortly after President Wilson's visit to England. "Former times if a feller understood C. O. D. and N. G., y'understand, he could read the papers and get sense out of it the same like he would be a college gradgwate, already; but nowadays when you pick up a morning paper and read that Colonel Harris Lefkowitz, we would say, for example, A. D. C. to the C. O. at G. H. Q. of the A. E. F., has been decorated with the D. S. O., you feel that the only way to get a line on what is going on in the world is to get posted on this—now—algebry which ambitious young shipping-clerks gets fired for studying during office hours."

"Well, if you get mixed up by these here letters, think what it must be like for President Wilson to suddenly get one of them English statesmen sprung on him by—we would say—the King—where the King says: 'Mr. President, shake hands with the Rutt Hon. Duke of Cholomondley, K.C.M.G., R.V.O., K.C.B., F.P.A., G.S.I., and sometimes W. and Y.,'" Morris said, "in especially

as I understand Cholomondley is pronounced as if written Rabinowitz."

"It would anyhow give the President a tropic for conversation such as ain't it the limit what you got to pay to get visiting-cards engraved nowadays, which it really and truly must cost the English aristocracy a fortune for such things," Abe said, "in particularly if the daughter of such a feller gets married with engraved invitations, Mawruss, after he had paid the stationery bill, y'understand, he wouldn't got nothing left for her dowry."

"Well, I guess the President wasn't in no danger of running out of tropics of conversation while he was in England, Abe," Morris said, "which during all the spare time Mr. Wilson had on his trip he did nothing but hold conversations with Mr. Balfour, and this here Lord George, and you could take it from me, Abe, there wasn't many pauses to be filled up by Mr. Wilson saying ain't it a funny weather we are having nowadays, or something like that."

"How do you know?" Abe asked. "Was you there?"

"I wasn't there," Morris said, "but last night I was speaking in the lobby of the hotel to one of them newspaper reporters which made the trip with the President, and after I had given the young feller one of the cigars we brought with us from New York he got quite friendly and told me all about it. It seems, Abe, that the visit was a wonderful success, in particular the first

day Mr. Wilson was in England. The weather was one of the finest days they had in winter over in England for years already. Only six inches of rain, and the passage across the English Channel was so smooth for this time of the year that less than eighty per cent. of the passengers was ill as against the normal percentage of 99.31416. As Mr. Wilson had requested that no fuss should be made over his visit, things was kept down as much as possible, so that, on leaving Calais, the President's boat was escorted by only ten torpedo-boat destroyers, a couple battle-ships, three cruisers, and eight-twelfths of a dozen assorted submarines. There was also a simple and informal escort of about fifty airy-oplanes, the six dirigible balloons having been cut out of the program in accordance from the President's wishes. However, Abe, all this simplicity was nothing compared to the way they acted when the President arrived at Dover. There the arrangements was what you might expect when the President of a plain, democratic people visits the country of another plain, democratic people, Abe. The only people there to meet them was about twenty or thirty dukes, a few field-marshals, three regiments of soldiers, including the bands, and somebody which the newspaper reporter says he at first took for Caruso in the second act of 'Aïda' and afterwards proved to be the mayor of Dover in his official costume.

"The ceremony of welcoming Mr. and Mrs. Wilson to the shores of England was very short,

the whole thing being practically over in two hours and thirty minutes," Morris continued. "It consisted of either the firing of a Presidential salute of twenty-one guns or the playing of the American National Anthem by the massed bands of three regiments, the reporter says he couldn't tell which, on account he stood behind one of the drums. Later the President made a short speech, in which he said: 'May I not say how glad I am to land in Dover,' or something to that effect."

"And after that boat-ride from France he would have said so if it had been Barren Island, or any other place—just so long as it was free from earthquakes and didn't roll none," Abe agreed. "Also, Mawruss," he continued, "some day the President is going to begin a speech with, 'May I not,' and the chairman of the meeting will take him at his word and put it to a standing vote, and it is going to surprise the President how few people is going to remain seated on the proposition of whether or not he shall continue to begin letters and speeches with, 'May I not.'"

"Say!" Morris exclaimed. "When we get by mail a cancelation and answer it, 'Dear Gents, Your favor received,' does that mean we think the customer is doing us a favor by canceling an order on us? *Oser a Stuck.* And in the same way, when Mr. Wilson says, 'May I not?' nobody fools themselves for a minute that the President is asking permission. That's just a habit us and him got into, Abe, and in fact, Abe, Mr. Wilson's

'May-I-nots' have always meant that not only was he going to say what he intended to say, but that he was also going to do it, too. So, therefore, you take the speech he made at the Gelthall in London, and—"

"But as I understand your story, Mawruss, he only just arrived in Dover," Abe said, "so go ahead with your lies, and tell me what happened next."

"Well," Morris went on to say, "after the mayor of Dover had presented Mr. Wilson with the Freedom of the City in a gold casket—"

"Excuse me, Mawruss," Abe interrupted, "but what is this here Freedom of the City that mayors is all the time presenting to Mr. Wilson?"

"I don't know," Morris replied, "except that seemingly a Freedom of the City always comes in a gold casket."

"Sure, I know," Abe said, "but what does Mr. Wilson gain by all these here Freedoms of Cities?"

"Gold caskets," Morris replied, "although I think myself that some of these mayors ain't above getting by with a gold-plated silver casket, or even a rolled-gold casket, relying on the fact that Mr. Wilson is too much of a gentleman to get an appraisal, anyhow till he returns to America."

"Well, if I would be Mr. Wilson, I wouldn't take it so particular to act too gentlemanly to them mayors," Abe commented, "because I see in the papers that when the mayor of London presented him with the Freedom of the City,

Mr. Wilson got the Freedom part, but he was told that the gold casket was in preparation, which I admit that I don't know nothing about this here mayor of London, but you know how it is when a customer gets married, Mawruss, and we put off sending him a wedding present till we could get round to it, y'understand, which we are all human, Mawruss, and it wouldn't surprise me in the least if six months from now the mayor of London would be going round saying, 'Why should we give that feller a gold casket—am I right or wrong?'—and let the whole gold-casket thing die a natural death."

"They'll probably come across with it after a few how-about-casket cables, and, anyhow, if they didn't, Abe, the English people certainly done enough for Mr. Wilson," Morris continued, "because that newspaper reporter told me that the reception which Mr. Wilson got in London was something enormous, y'understand. The King and Queen was waiting to meet him and the station platform was covered with a red-velvet pile carpet which was so thick, understand me, that they 'ain't been able as yet to locate a couple of suit-cases which was carelessly put down by the Rutt Hon. the Duke of Warrington, K.G.Y., Y.M.H.A., First Lord Red Cap in Waiting, and sunk completely out of sight while he helped a couple of Assistant Red Caps in Waiting, also dukes, load the Presidential wardrobe trunks on the Royal Baggage Transfer truck."

"What do you mean—also dukes?" Abe de-

manded. "Do you mean to say that the Red Caps which hustles the King's baggage is dukes?"

"At the very least," Morris declared, "because the Master of the Royal Fox-hounds is an earl, Abe, and I leave it to you, Abe, if handling baggage ain't a better job than feeding dogs. Also, Abe, there is Lords in Waiting and Ladies in Waiting, and it wouldn't surprise me in the slightest if during their stay in Buckingham Palace some of the members of Mr. Wilson's party which ain't been tipped off have telephoned down to the office for towels and kept the Marquis of Hendersonville, Lancs County, England, Knight Commander of the Bath, waiting at the bedroom door ten minutes, while they went through all their clothes trying to find something smaller than a quarter to slip him."

"And do you believe for one moment, Mawruss —if there was a Marquis of Hendersonville, which I never heard of such a person, Mawruss—and he did happen to be Knight Commander of the Bath, y'understand, that he is actually handing out soap and towels in the King of England's palace?" Abe inquired.

"Certainly I don't believe it," Morris replied, "and I also don't believe that calling anybody Right Honorable is going to make him any more right than he is honorable, unless, of course, he is honorable to start with and really and truly wants to be right, y'understand. And that is what Mr. Wilson went to England to find out, Abe, because it ain't going to affect the Peace

Conference one way or the other if the Master of the Royal Fox-hounds don't know a dawg-biscuit from a gingersnap, y'understand, whereas if this here war is going to be settled once and for all, Abe, it's quite important that the Right Honorable English statesmen should have right and honorable intentions."

"And did Mr. Wilson find out?" Abe asked.

"Sure he did," Morris said, "although from what this here newspaper reporter tells me, Abe, there was a whole lot of lost motion about the investigation. Take, for instance, the attitude of Mr. Lord George on the Freedom of the Seas, for instance, and you would think that in the case of a busy man like Mr. Wilson, y'understand, he would of rung him up on the telephone, made an appointment for luncheon the next morning, and by half past one at the outside they would have got the matter in such shape that the only point not settled between 'em would be a friendly quarrel as to see who should pay for the eats, y'understand. Actually, however, the arrangements for having Mr. Wilson get into touch with Lord George was conducted by the Comptroller of the Royal Household, and the line of march was down Piccadilly as far as Forty-second Street, over to Hyde Park, and by way of Hyde Park west to Eighth Avenue to Mr. Lord George's office in the London & Liverpool Title Guarantee and Trust Company Building. The order of procession was as follows:

"Twelve mounted policemen.

"The band of the King's Own Sixty-ninth Regiment.

"Typographical Union No. 6, Allied Printing Trades Council of Great Britain and Ireland.

"William J. Mustard Association, Drum and Fife Corps.

"Household Guards.

"First carriage—Mr. Wilson and the King.

"Second carriage—Mrs. Wilson and the Queen.

"Third carriage—Mr. George Creel.

"Fourth carriage—Master of the Royal Fox-hounds, Master of the Royal Buck-hounds, Master of the Royal Stag-hounds, two Masters of Assorted hounds.

"Six Motor-cycle Policemen.

"The Stock Exchange closed, and promissory notes falling due on that date became automatically payable on the following day. Admission to the reviewing-stand was by card, some of which found their way into the hands of the speculators, and will shortly be the subject of a John Doe investigation by the district attorney of Middlesex County, so the newspaper feller told me."

"But what is this here Lord George's attitude towards the Freedom of the Seas, Mawruss?" Abe asked.

"That the newspaper feller didn't know," Morris said.

"Well, who does know?" Abe insisted.

"Lord George," Morris replied.

IV

EVERYTHING IS PROCEEDING SATISFACTORILY—MAYBE

"YES, Abe," Morris Perlmutter said to his partner, Abe Potash, a few days after Mr. Wilson's return from his visit to Italy, "up to a short time ago hardly anybody in America had ever even heard about Italy's claims to the Dalmatian territory."

"Naturally!" Abe replied; "because if there is six people in the whole United States which is engaged in the business of selling spotted dogs to fire-engine houses, Mawruss, that would be big already."

Morris threw up both hands in a gesture of despair. "What is the use talking foreign politics to a feller which thinks that Italy's claims to the Dalmatian territory means she wants the exclusive right to make New York, Cleveland, Chicago, and St. Louis with a line of spotted dogs for fire-engine companies!" he exclaimed.

"And I wouldn't even have known that it meant that much," Abe retorted, entirely unabashed, "excepting that six months ago my wife's sister's cousin wanted me I should advance her a hundred dollars to pay a lawyer he should

bring suit against the city for her on account she got bitten by one of them fire-house Dalmatians, Mawruss, which up to that time I always had an idea they was splashed-up white dogs. So go ahead, Mawruss, I'll be the goat. What is Italy's claims to the Dalmatian territory?"

"Well, in the first place, Italy thinks she should be awarded all them towns where a majority of the people which lives in them speaks Italian," Morris said; "like Fiume, Spalato, Ragusa—"

"Also New Rochelle, Mount Vernon, and The Bronx," Abe added; "and if she wants to get nasty, Mawruss, she could claim all the territory east of Third Avenue, from Ninetieth Street up to the Harlem River, too. Furthermore, Mawruss, there is neighborhoods south of Washington Square where not only the majority of the people speaks Italian, but the minority speaks it also. So you see how complicated things becomes when a new beginner like me starts in to talk foreign politics."

"For that matter, all us Americans is new beginners on foreign politics, from Mr. Wilson down, Abe," Morris said. "And that is why Mr. Wilson done a wise thing when he visited Italy the other day, and took a lot of American newspaper fellers with him, because, between you and me, Abe, it wouldn't surprise me in the least if some of them reporters went down there under the impression that the only thing which distinguished Ragusa from Ravioli or Spalato from

Spaghetti was the difference in the shape of the noodles, but that otherwise they was cooked the same, with chicken livers and tomato sauce, which you know how it is in America: ninety per cent. of the people gets their education from reading in newspapers, and the consequence is that if the American newspaper reporters has a sort of hazy idea that Sonnino is either an item on the bill of fare, to be passed up on account of having garlic in it, or else a tenor which the Metropolitan Opera House ain't given a contract to as yet, y'understand, then the American public has got the same sort of hazy idea. So Mr. Wilson done the right thing traveling to Italy, even if he did have an uncomfortable journey."

"What do you mean—an uncomfortable journey?" Abe demanded. "Why, I understand he traveled on the King of Italy's royal train!"

"Sure, I know," Morris agreed; "but when a king is sleeping on a royal train in Europe, Abe, he can be pretty near as comfortable as a traveling-salesman sitting up all night on a day-coach in America, and if he spends two nights on such a royal train, the way President Wilson did in going from Paris to Rome, which is about as far as from New York to Chicago, y'understand, it wouldn't make no difference how many people is waiting at the station to holler 'Long live the King!' understand me, he is going to feel half dead, anyway."

"And yet there is people which claims that Mr. Wilson don't give a whoop whether he makes himself popular or not," Abe commented, "which

before I could lay awake two nights on a train, I wouldn't care if every newspaper reporter in the United States never got no nearer to Italy than a fifty-cent *table d'hôte*, including wine."

"Maybe you would care if you was going to Italy to make speeches the way Mr. Wilson did," Morris said. "Which if the King of Italy was to go to America and make speeches in Italian at the Capitol in Washington, it would be just as well if he would bring along an audience of a few dozen Italians with him, and not depend on enough barbers, shoe-blacks, and vegetable-stand keepers horning in on the proceedings to give the Congressmen and Senators a hint as to where the applause should come in. In fact, I was speaking to one of them newspaper fellers which went to Italy, Abe, and he says that he listened carefully to all the speeches which was made in Italian, Mawruss, and that once he thought he heard the word Chianti mentioned, but he couldn't say for certain. He told me, however, that the correspondent of *The New York Evening Post* also claims that he heard Orlando, the Prime Minister, in a speech delivered in Rome, use the words Il Trovatore, but that otherwise the whole thing was like having the misfortune to see somebody give an imitation of Eddie Foy when you've escaped seeing Eddie Foy in the first place, so you can imagine what chance Mr. Wilson would have stood with them Italians if the American correspondents hadn't been along to start the cries of 'Bravo!' in the right spot.

"So you see, Abe, it's a good thing for them newspaper men to see what kind of people the Italians is in their own country," Morris continued, "because if this here League of Nations idea is going to be put over by Mr. Wilson, Americans should ought to know from the start that Italy is a Big League nation and its batting average in this war is just as good as the other Big League nations."

"Did any one say it wasn't?" Abe demanded.

"I know they didn't," Morris said. "But just the same, Abe, there's a whole lot of people in America which judges the Italians by the way they behave in the ice business and 'Cavalleria Rusticana,' and also a feller can get a very unfavorable opinion of Italians by being shaved in one of them ten-cent palace barber shops, understand me, so even if them newspaper men couldn't appreciate the performance without a libretto, y'understand, they could anyhow see for themselves that the Italians in Italy is doctors and lawyers, clothing-dealers and bankers, just the same like the Americans are in America, and if they can pass the word back home, with a few details of how it feels to be a foreigner in a foreign country, that wouldn't do no harm, neither."

"That is something which an American newspaper correspondent wouldn't touch on at all," Abe said, "because I bet that every last one of them has already sent back to America an article about this trip to Italy, which, when the readers of his newspaper looks at it, Mawruss, not only

would they think that he understood Sonnino's speech from start to finish, y'understand, but also that every time the newspaper feller is in Rome, which the article would lead one to believe has been on an average of once a week for the past ten years, Mawruss, him and Sonnino drink coffee together."

"Ain't he taking a big chance when he writes a thing like that?" Morris commented.

"Yow! A chance!" Abe exclaimed. "Why, to read the things that a few of these here Washington correspondents used to write when they was in America yet, you would think every one of them was pestered to death with telephone messages from the White House where Mr. Tumulty says if the newspaper feller has got a little spare time that evening the President would consider it a big favor if he would step around to the White House, as Mr. Wilson would like to ask him an advice about a diplomatic note which has just been received from Lord George in regards to the Freedom of the Seas or something."

"But don't you suppose the newspaper which a nervy individual like that is working for would fire him on the spot?" Morris observed.

"Not at all," Abe said, "because the newspaper-owner likes people to get the idea that the newspaper has got such an important feller for a Washington correspondent, just as much as the correspondent does himself, Mawruss, so you can imagine the bluff some of them fellers is going to throw now that they really got something inter-

esting to write about like this here Peace Conference. If Mr. Wilson gains all his fourteen points, y'understand, the special Paris correspondent of the Bridgetown, Pa., *Daily Register* is going to write home, 'And he could have gained fifteen if he would only have listened to me.' Also, Mawruss, during the next three months, if the Peace Conference lasts that long, the readers of the Cyprus, N. J., *Evening Chronicle* is going to get the idea that President Wilson, Clemenceau, Lord George, and a feller by the name of Delos M. Jones, who is writing Peace Conference articles for the Cyprus, N. J., *Evening Chronicle*, are in secret conference together every day, including Sundays, from 10 A.M. to midnight, fixing up the boundaries between Rumania and Servia."

"Well, them boys has got to produce something to make their bosses back in America continue paying salary and traveling expenses," Morris said, "because from what this here newspaper correspondent tells me, if he didn't get his imagination working, all he could write for his paper would be descriptions of Paris scenery, including the outside of the buildings where on the insides, with the doors locked and the curtains pulled, Mr. Wilson and the American Peace Commissioners is openly and notoriously carrying on open and notorious peace conversations with the other allied Peace Commissioners, and for all the newspaper correspondents know to the contrary, Abe, the only point on which them Peace Commission

fellers ain't breaking up the furniture over is that when they come out, y'understand, it is agreed that the newspaper correspondents will be told that everything is proceeding satisfactorily."

"But I thought Mr. Wilson promised before he left America that the old secret diplomacy would be a thing of the past," Abe said.

"So he did," Morris agreed, "and by what I gather from this here newspaper man he kept his promise, too, and we now have got a new diplomacy, compared to which the fellers who were working under the rules of the old secret diplomacy bladded everything they knew."

"But I distinctly read it in the papers the other day that every morning at half past ten, Mawruss, Mr. Lansing meets the newspaper correspondents and lets them know what's been going on," Abe said.

"He meets them," Morris replied, "but so far as letting them know what has been going on is concerned, all he says that everything is proceeding satisfactorily and is there any gentleman there which would like to ask him any questions, which naturally any newspaper correspondent who could ask Mr. Lansing such questions as would make Mr. Lansing give out any information he didn't want to give out, wouldn't be wasting his time working as a newspaper correspondent, Abe, but would be considering offers from the law firm of Hughes, Brandeis, Stanchfield, Hughes & Stanchfield to come in as a full partner and take exclusive charge of the cross-examination of busted railroad presidents."

"Maybe the reason why Mr. Lansing don't tell them newspaper correspondents nothing is that he ain't got nothing to tell them," Abe suggested.

"Well, then, if I would be him, Abe, I would make up something," Morris said, "because if he don't they will, or anyhow some of them will, and there is going to be a lot of stuff printed in American papers where the correspondent says he learns from high authority that things ain't going so good in the Peace Conference as Mr. Wilson would like, because Mr. Wilson is the doctor in the case, and you know how it is when somebody is too sick to be seen and the doctor is worried, Abe, he sends down word by the nurse that everything is proceeding satisfactorily, and the visitor goes away trying to remember did he or did he not throw away that fifty-cent black four-in-hand tie he wore to the last funeral he went to."

"I got a whole lot of confidence in Mr. Wilson as the doctor for this here war-sickness which Europe is suffering from, Mawruss," Abe said.

"So have I," Morris said: "but you've got to remember that there's a whole lot of those doctors on the case, Abe—some of them quack doctors, too, and, when the doctors disagree, who is to decide?"

"I don't know," Abe said; "but I think I know who would like to."

"Who?" Morris asked.

"Some of these here Washington newspaper correspondents you was talking about," Abe concluded.

V

THIS HERE PEACE CONFERENCE—IT NEEDS PUBLICITY

"WELL, Mawruss," Abe Potash said, as he and his partner, Morris Perlmutter, sat at breakfast in their Paris hotel one Sunday morning, "I see that the Peace Conference had a meeting the other day where it was regularly moved and seconded that there should be a League of Nations, and, in spite of what them Republican Senators back home predicted, Mawruss, when Chairman Clemenceau said, 'Contrary minded,' you could of heard a pin drop."

"Sure you could," Morris Perlmutter agreed, "because the way this here Peace Conference is being run, Abe, when Mr. Clemenceau says: 'All those in favor would please say *Aye*,' he ain't *asking* them, he's TELLING them, which I was speaking to the newspaper feller last night, Abe, and he says that, compared to the delegates at this here Peace Convention, y'understand, the delegates of a New York County Democratic Convention are free to act as they please. In fact, Abe, as I understand it, at the sewed-up political conventions which they hold it in America, the bosses do occasionally let a delegate get up

and say a few words which ain't on the program exactly, but at this here Peace Convention a delegate who tries to get off a speech which 'ain't first been submitted in writing ten days in advance should ought to go into training for it by picking quarrels with waiters in all-night restaurants.

"Take this here meeting which they held it on Saturday, Abe," Morris continued, "and it was terrible the way Chairman Clemenceau jumps, for instance, on a feller from Belgium by the name M. Hyman."

"That ain't the same M. Hyman which used to was M. Hyman & Co. in the coat-pad business?" Abe inquired.

"This here M. Hyman used to was a Belgium minister in London," Morris went on, "which he got up and objected to the way the five big nations—America, Great Britain, France, Italy, and Japan—was, so to speak, hogging the convention."

"Well, I think the Reverend Hyman was right, at that," Abe said, "which I just finished reading Mr. Wilson's speech at that meeting, Mawruss, in which he said that no longer should the select classes govern the rest of mankind, y'understand, and after the American, French, British, Italian, and Japanese delegates gets through applauding what Mr. Wilson says, they select themselves to run the rest of the nations in the League of Nations. Naturally an ex-minister like the Reverend Hyman is going to say, 'Why don't you practise what you preach?'"

"And if he wouldn't of been an ex-minister, Abe," Morris said, "the chances is that Chairman Clemenceau would of whispered a few words into the cauliflower ear of one of the sergeants-at-arms, and when the session closed, y'understand, the hat-check boy would have had one hat left over with the initials M. H. in it which Mr. Hyman didn't have time to claim before he hit the car tracks, y'understand, and I wouldn't blame Chairman Clemenceau, neither, because, if this here Peace Conference is going to end this side of nineteen-fifty, it's got to be speeded up some."

"Nobody says it 'ain't," Abe agreed, "but this here M. Hyman is a Belgium and he's got a right to be heard."

"He *would* have if everybody didn't admit that Belgium shall be protected in every which way, Abe," Morris agreed, "but there is also a lot of small nations which has got delegates at the Peace Convention, like Cuba, y'understand, and some of them South American republics, and, once you begin with them fellers, where are you going to leave off? Take, for instance, the Committee on Reparation, which has got charge of deciding how much money Germany ought to pay for losses suffered by the countries which made war on her, y'understand, and there wasn't one of them Spanish-American republics which didn't want to get appointed on that committee, because, when the Reparation Committee gets to work, practically all of them republics is going

"I wouldn't blame Chairman Clemenceau neither, because if this here Peace Conference is going to end this side of nineteen fifty, it's got to be speeded up some."

to come along with claims for smoke damages, bills for labor in connection with ripping out the fixtures of confiscated German steamers, loss of services of the Presidents of such republics by reason of tonsillitis from talking about how bravely they would have fought if they had raised an army and navy which they didn't, y'understand, and any other claims against Germany which they think they might have had a chance to get by with."

"Well, of course there is bound to be a lot of them small republics which is going to make a play for a little easy money, Mawruss," Abe said, "but the indications is that when the proofs of claims is filed by the alleged creditors, y'understand, there would be a couple of them comma hounds on the Reparation Committee which would reject such claims on the grounds of misplaced semicolons alone. Then six months hafterwards, when the representative of one of them republics goes over to what used to was the office of the Peace Conference with a revised proof of claim, which he has just received by return mail, understand me, he would find the premises temporarily occupied by one of them crooked special-sale trunk concerns, and that's all there would *be* to it."

"Then you think that this here Peace Conference would only last six months, Abe?" Morris asked.

"Sure I do," Abe replied, "and less, even, because right now already the interest is begin-

ning to die out, which it wouldn't surprise me in the slightest, Mawruss, if in three weeks or so, when Mr. Wilson is temporarily out of the cast on account of going home to America to sign the new tax bill, y'understand, the attendance of the delegates would begin to fall off so bad, understand me, that the Peace Conference managers would got to spend a lot of money for putting in advertisements that George Clemenceau presents:

"'THE INTERNATIONAL PEACE CONFERENCE

The Unparalleled Success of Two Hemispheres

'Enthralling'.....*Tribune*
'Punch with a Kick in It'.....*Sun*
'Vigor and Suspense'.....*World*
'Wins Audience'.....*Globe*
'Gripping'.....*Mail*
'Ausgezeichnet'.....*Tageblatt*

QUAI D'ORSAY

NOW.

Matinees, Saturday, 2:30.'"

"And even then they wouldn't get an audience, Abe," Morris said, "because those kind of advertisements don't fool nobody but the suckers which pays for them, Abe."

"Maybe not," Abe agreed, "but if the delegates stays away, Mawruss, the Peace Conference could always get an audience by letting in the newspaper correspondents, which I don't care if

in addition to Mr. Lord George and Colonel House they would got performing at this here Peace Conference Douglas Fairbanks and Caruso, it wouldn't be a success as a show, *anyhow*, because no theayter could get any audiences if they would make it a policy to bar out the newspaper crickets."

"Well, I'll tell you," Morris began. "Nobody likes to read in newspapers more than I do, Abe. They help to pass away many unpleasant minutes in the Subway when a feller would otherwise be figuring on if God forbid the brakes shouldn't hold what is going to become of his wife and children, y'understand; but, at the same time, from the way this here newspaper feller which hogs our cigars is talking, Abe, I gather that the big majority of newspaper reporters now in Paris has got the idea that this here Peace Conference is being held mainly to give newspaper reporters a chance to write home a lot of snappy articles about peace conferences, past and present. Although, of course, there is certain more or less liberal-minded newspaper men which think that if, incidentally, Mr. Wilson puts over the League of Nations and the Freedom of the Seas, why, they 'ain't got no serious objections, just so long as it don't involve talking the matter over privately without a couple of hundred newspaper reporters present."

"Sure, I know," Abe said; "but if them newspaper fellers has got such an idee, Mawruss, it is Mr. Wilson's own fault, because ever since we

got into the war, y'understand, Mr. Wilson has been talking about open covenants of peace openly arrived at, and even before we went into the war he got off the words 'pitiful publicity,' and also it was him and not the newspaper men which first give the readers of newspapers to understand that the old secret diplomacy was a thing of the past, Mawruss, so the consequences was that, when Mr. Wilson come over here, the owners of newspapers sent to Paris everybody that was working for them—from dramatic crickets to baseball experts—just so long as they could write the English language, y'understand, because them newspaper-owners figured that, according to Mr. Wilson's own suggestions, this here Peace Conference was not only going to be a wide-open affair, openly arrived at, y'understand, but also pitifully public, whereas not only it ain't wide open, Mawruss, but it is about as pitifully public as a conference between the members of the financial committee of Tammany Hall on the day before Election. Also, Mawruss, a newspaper reporter could arrive at that Peace Conference openly or he could arrive at it disguised with false whiskers till his own wife wouldn't know him from a Jugo-Slob delegate, y'understand, and he couldn't get past the elevator-starter even."

"That was when the conference opened," Morris said; "but I understand they are now letting them into the next room and giving them once in a while a look through the door during the supper

turns when the Polack and Servian delegates is performing."

"And that ain't going to do them a whole lot of good, neither," Abe declared, "because this here newspaper feller told me last night, when he was smoking my last cigar, that he has been mailing back an article a day to America ever since the President arrived here and there ain't not one of them which has got there yet."

"And I was reading in the America edition of the Paris edition of the London edition of the Manchester, England, *Daily News* that the newspaper correspondents couldn't only send back a couple of hundred words or so by telegraph, Abe," Morris said, "which the way it looks to me, Abe, if some news don't find its way back to America pretty quick about this here Peace Conference and Mr. Wilson, y'understand, people back home in Washington is going to say to each other, 'I wonder whatever become of this here—now—Wilson?' and the friend is going to say, '*What* Wilson?' And the other feller would then say, 'Why, this here Woodruff Wilson.' And then the friend would say, 'Oh, HIM! Didn't he move away to Paris or something?' And the other feller would then say, 'I see where Benny Leonard put up a wonderful fight in Madison Square Garden yesterday,' and that's all there would be to THAT conversation."

"Maybe it is because of this, and not because of signing the new tax bill, that the President is

going home in a few days for a short stay in America," Abe suggested.

"Sure, I know," Morris agreed; "but what good is them short visits going to do him, because I ain't such an optician like you are, Abe. I believe that this here Peace Conference is going to last a whole lot longer than six months, Abe, and, if Mr. Wilson keeps on going home and coming back, maybe the first time he goes back he would get some little newspaper publicity out of it, and the second time also, perhaps, but on the third when he returns from France only the Democratic newspapers would give him more as half a column about it, and later on, when he lands from his third to tenth trips, inclusive, all the notice the papers would take from it would be that in the ship's news on the ninth page there would be a few lines saying that among those returning on the S.S. *George Washington* was J. L. Abrahams, and so on through the B's, C's, and D's right straight down to the W's, which you would got to read over several times before you would discover the President tucked away as W. Wilson between two fellers named Max Wangenheim and Abraham Welinsky."

"There is something in what you say, Mawruss," Abe admitted; "but, at the same time, a big man like Mr. Wilson ain't looking to get no newspaper notoriety. He is working to become famous."

"Sure, I know," Morris said; "but the only difference between notoriety and fame is that with

notoriety you get the publicity now, whereas with fame you get the publicity fifty years from now, and the publicity which Mr. Wilson is going to get fifty years from now ain't going to help him a whole lot in the next presidential campaign."

"Mr. Wilson ain't worrying about the next presidential campaign, Mawruss," Abe declared. "What he is trying to do is to make a success of this here Peace Conference."

"Then he would better get a press agent for it," Morris observed, "because, if they don't get some more publicity, it will die on its feet."

VI

JOINING THE LEGION OF HONOR

"I SEE where several Americans took advantage to join the Legion of Honor while they was over here," Morris Perlmutter remarked, as he sat at luncheon with his partner, Abe Potash, in the restaurant of their Paris hotel.

"Some people is crazy for life insurance," Abe Potash commented, "in especially if they could combine it with the privilege to make speeches at lodge-meetings. Also, Mawruss, a whole lot of people is so badly predicted to the lapel-button habit that they would join anything just so long as they get a lapel-button to show for it."

"But this here Legion of Honor must be a pretty good fraternal-insurance proposition at that," Morris observed, "because it says here in the paper where several New York bankers has gone into it, which it's a mighty hard thing to separate them fellers from their money even with first-class, A-number-one, gilt-edged, two-name commercial paper, and if this here Legion of Honor was just a lapel-button affair which assessed its members every time they had a death claim to pay, you could take it from me, Abe, not one of them bankers would of went near it, so maybe

HENRY HARDHEAD
PRIVATE
KEEP OUT
THE ANCIENT BENEVOLENT AND FRATERNAL ORDER OF THE LEGION OF HONOR
(ONE MEMBERSHIP)
L OF H
L OF H
APPLICATION BLANK
SAMPLE CASE
URGENT
SPECIAL
ALBERT LEVERING
"a whole lot of people is so badly predicted to the lapel button habit they would join anything"

it would be a good thing if we looked into it, Abe."

"If you want to join this here Legion of Honor, that's *your* business, Mawruss," Abe said, "but I already belong to the Independent Order Mattai Aaron, which I've been paying them crooks for three years now that I should get a sick benefit fifteen dollars a week without being laid up with so much as tonsillitis even."

"About the sick benefit I wasn't thinking about at all," Morris declared; "but you take a feller like Sam Feder, president of the Kosciusko Bank, for instance, and if we should be maybe next year a little short and wanted an accommodation from two to three thousand dollars, y'understand, it wouldn't do us no harm if we could give him the L. of H. grip for a starter. Am I right or wrong?"

"Say!" Abe exclaimed. "The chances is that when them New York bankers gets back to New York they will want to forget all about joining this here L. of H."

"Why, what is there so disgraceful about joining the L. of H.?" Morris asked.

"Nobody said nothing about its being disgraceful, because lots of decent, respectable fellers is liable to make a mistake of that kind, understand me," Abe said; "but *you* take one of these here members of the firm of—we would say, for example, J. G. Morgan, y'understand, which comes back from Paris after joining this here L. of H., and what happens him? The first morning he comes down to the office wearing

an L. of H. button, Mawruss, everybody from the paying-teller up is going to ask him what is the idea of the button, and he is going to spend the rest of the day listening to stories about people joining insurance fraternities which busted up and left the members with undetermined sentences of from three to five years, y'understand. The consequence would be that if any of his depositors expect to get an accommodation by giving him the L. of H. grip or wearing an L. of H. button, y'understand, they might just so well send him an invitation to a banquet where, in order to gain his confidence and respect, they are going to drink champagne out of an actress's slipper, and be done with it. Am I right or wrong?"

"Well, you couldn't exactly blame them fellers which joined the L. of H.," Morris observed, "because Paris has a very funny effect on some of the most level-headed Americans which goes there without their families and business associates, which if this here League of Nations had been fixed up at a Peace Conference held somewheres down on Lower Broadway instead of the Quai d'Orsay, Abe, the chances is that the United States Senate would of had a whole lot more confidence in it than they have at present."

"Say!" Abe explained. "This here League of Nations could of been pulled off in Paris or it could of been pulled off in a respectable neighborhood like Prospect Park West, Brooklyn, Mawruss, for all the spare time it gave the fellers which framed it to indulge in any wild night life.

Take, for instance, the proposed constitution and by-laws, which was printed on three pages of the newspaper the other day, Mawruss, and anybody which dictated that *megillah* to a stenographer would be too hoarse for weeks afterwards to order so much as a plain Benedictine. Also, Mawruss, nobody which didn't lead a blameless life could have a brain clear enough to *understand* the thing, let alone composing it, which last night I sat up till two o'clock this morning reading them twenty-six articles, Mawruss, and ten grains of asperin hardly touched the headache which I got from it."

"Naturally," Morris said, "because when Mr. Wilson wrote that constitution, Abe, he figured that people which is going to read it has got a better education as one year in night school."

"Sure, I know," Abe agreed, satirically, "but at the same time everybody ain't such a natural-born Harvard gradgawate like you are, Mawruss, and furthermore, Mawruss, it's a big mistake for Mr. Wilson to go ahead on the idea that we *are*, y'understand, because, so far as I remember it, the Constitution of the United States didn't say that this was a government of the college gradgawates by the college gradgawates for the college gradgawates, y'understand; neither did the Declaration of Independence start in by saying, 'We, the college gradgawates of the United States,' Mawruss. The consequences is that most of us ingeramusses which has got one vote apiece, even around last November already, begun to

feel neglected, and you could take it from me, Mawruss, if Mr. Wilson tries to win the confidence of the American people with a few more of them documents with the twin-six words in them, y'understand, by the time he gets ready to run for President again, Mawruss, the only people which is going to vote for him would be the Ph.D. and A.M. fellers."

"Well, Mawruss," Abe said, a few days after the conversation above set forth, "I see that President Wilson got back to America after a rough passage."

"Was he seasick?" Morris asked.

"Not a day," Abe replied.

"Then that accounts for it," Morris commented.

"Accounts for what?" Abe asked.

"Doctor Grayson being an admiral," Morris replied, "which a couple of years ago, when Mr. Wilson appointed Doctor Grayson to be an admiral over the heads of a couple of hundred fellers which had been captains of ships for years already, a lot of people got awful sore about it, and now it appears that he got the appointment because he can cure seasickness."

"I suppose if Doctor Grayson could cure locomotive ataxia the President would of appointed him Director-General of Railroads," Abe remarked.

"For my part, Abe," Morris said, "if I had a good doctor like Doctor Grayson attending me, and it was necessary to appoint him to something in order to keep him, Abe, I would appoint him a field-marshal, just so long as he could make

me comfortable on an Atlantic trip in wintertime."

"But there isn't no office in the army or navy that President Wilson could appoint Doctor Grayson to which would have been a big enough reward if Doctor Grayson could have made the President feel comfortable in Washington when he got there, Mawruss," Abe said, "which I see by the paper this morning that thirty-seven United States Senators, coming from every state in the Union except Missouri, suddenly discovered they was from Missouri, in particular the Senator from Massachusetts, and not only does them Senators want to know what the meaning of that constitution of the League of Nations means, but they also give notice that, *whatever* it means, they are going to knife it, *anyway*."

"Sure, I know," Morris said; "they're like a lot of business men you and me has had experience with, Abe. They claim a shortage and kick about the quality of the shipment before they even start to unpack the goods. Why don't they wait till Mr. Wilson goes back and finishes up his job?"

"They haven't got the time," Abe replied, "because the session ends on March 4th at noon, just about twenty-four hours before Admiral Grayson is paying his first professional call on President Wilson aboard the *George Washington*, and by the time Congress gets together again President Wilson expects to have the League of Nations proposition sewed up so tight that there

will be nothing left for them Senators to do but to indorse it."

"But, as I understand it, them Senators just loafed away their time during the end of the session and didn't pass a whole lot of laws which they should ought to have passed, Abe, so that it will be necessary for President Wilson to call an extra session in a few days," Morris said.

"That's what them Senators figured," Abe agreed, "but they was mistaken, Mawruss, because the President ain't going to run any chances of being interrupted while he is working on this here Peace Conference by S O S messages from Washington to please come home if he wants to save *anything* out of the wreck Congress is making of the inside of the Capitol."

"But I thought that before he went to Europe in the first place, Abe, President Wilson said to Congress that it wouldn't make any difference to them about his being in Europe, because he was in close touch with them, and that the cables and the wireless would make him available just as though he was still living in the White House," Morris said.

"Sure, I know," Abe agreed; "but the trouble with that situation was that it 'ain't been discovered by the inventors yet how a President can shake hands with a Senator by wireless or how he can sit down to dinner by wireless with a few Congressmen and make them feel that he is their one best friend. Also, Mawruss, it comes high even for a President to send cable messages

to a Senator which he thinks is getting sore about something, such cable messages being in the nature of: 'Hello, Henry, what's the good word? Why is it I 'ain't seen you up to the White House lately, Henry?' or, 'Where have you been keeping yourself lately, Henry?' or, 'Mrs. Lodge and the children all right, Henry?' or something like that."

"Say, for that matter, Abe," Morris observed, "President Wilson never did a whole lot of jollying when he could have done it over the telephone at unlimited local-service rates. In fact, from what I have seen of Mr. Wilson, he looks to me like a man who would find it a whole lot easier to be easy in his manner toward Congressmen by wireless or by cable than face to face."

"Well, you couldn't blame Mr. Wilson exactly, Mawruss," Abe said, "because, up to the time he became Governor of New Jersey, his idea of being a good mixer was to get together with a couple of LL.D.'s and sit up till pretty near nine o'clock knocking the trustees, y'understand. In fact, up to the time he resigned from being president of Princeton College, life to Mr. Wilson was just correcting one examination paper after another, all of which 'ain't got nothing to do with this here League of Nations being a good thing, Mawruss," Abe declared.

"And it don't affect the fact that Mr. Wilson is a high-grade, A-number-one gentleman, which is doing the best he knows how to make good to his country, Abe," Morris declared.

"Did I say he wasn't?" Abe asked.

"Then what are you dragging up his past life for?" Morris demanded.

"What do you mean—dragging up his past life?" Abe rejoined. "The way you talk, Mawruss, you would think that being president of a college come in two degrees, like grand larceny, and had to be lived down through the guilty party getting the respect of the community by years of honest work."

"Say, lookyhere, Abe," Morris protested, "don't try to twist things around till it looks like I was knocking Mr. Wilson, and not you."

"I am knocking President Wilson!" Abe exclaimed. "Why, I've got the greatest respect for Mr. Wilson, and always did, Mawruss, but it would be foolish not to admit that the practice which a President of the United States gets in being a college professor is more useful to him in framing up a first-class, A-number-one League of Nations than it is in getting his political enemies to accept it. Am I wright or wrong?"

"Maybe he would have got them to accept it if he had stayed in touch with them personally and managed the Peace Conference by wireless and cable," Morris suggested.

"He probably figured that if he wanted to put over this here League of Nations it was more necessary for him to be on the job in France than on the job in America," Abe said.

"Well," Morris commented, "the next time the United States of America has a Peace Con-

ference on its hands, Abe, the President will have to be a copartnership instead of an individual, with one member of the firm in Washington and the other in Paris."

"But what would Admiral Grayson do?" Abe asked. "He couldn't be in two places at the same time."

"Probably the Washington President could find a bright young physician in the Treasury Department," Morris concluded, "and promote him to the honorary title and salary of Comptroller of the Currency."

VII

SOME CRUEL AND UNUSUAL PUNISHMENTS FOR THE KAISER

"I SEE where an American army officer reports that he has investigated into the food situation in Germany and that the German people looks thin," Abe Potash observed to his partner, Morris Perlmutter.

"That's already German propoganda, Abe," Morris said. "Word come down from headquarters that the German people should look thin in order to get the sympathy of the American officer, so they looked thin, y'understand."

Abe shrugged his shoulders. "Maybe you're right, Mawruss," he said, "but all I could say is that them German propoganders which has charge of making the German people look thin is wasting their time in Germany, because there is plenty people in America which would make them propoganders rich for life if they would only come over to New York and open an office for giving reduction propoganda at a thousand dollars a treatment."

"Well, I'll tell you," Morris said; "ordinarily, if the German people looked thin you would believe them. Also, before the war, if somebody went

to Germany and people asked him when he come back how was the weather there, he didn't say, 'Unless they was putting one over on me, it was snowing,' y'understand, but to-day it's different. Nobody has got no confidence in the Germans nowadays. In fact, even the Germans themselves is losing confidence in them. Take Berlin, for instance, and every week the Spartacist, or Red, government has got the support of the people from 9:30 A.M. Tuesday until 6 P.M. Thursday, when the German people begins to lose confidence in them, so that by 8:30 A.M. Friday the Coalition, or Yellow, government comes into power. The Coalition, or Yellow, government then keeps the confidence of the people until Sunday midnight, when, under the influence of the Sunday night *Ersat Delicatessen* supper, the Germans starts in to suspect that everything ain't right with the Yellow government, neither, so back they go to the Red government, and they seize Police Headquarters, the Bureau of Assessments and Arrears, and desk room in the office of the Deputy Commissioner of Water-supply, Gas, and Electricity, and that's the way it goes."

"It's a funny thing to me why them colored German governments always starts a revolution by seizing Police Headquarters, Mawruss," Abe commented.

"That's the way they finance the revolution," Morris replied; "because I understand that the night life in Berlin has been going on the same as usual, revolution or no revolution, Abe, which I

bet yer that as soon as the new chief of police is appointed by the Red or Yellow government, as the case may be, he don't waste no time, but he right away sends out plain-clothes men to the proprietors of them Berlin all-night restaurants with positive instructions to close all restaurants at eleven sharp and not to accept nothing but gold coin of the present standard of weight and fineness."

"And yet it used to be thought that when it comes to graft, Mawruss, German officials was like Cæsar's ghost," Abe observed—"above suspicion."

"That's only another way of them impressions about Germany which us Americans has had reversed on us, Abe," Morris said, "which the way our idees about what kind of a people the Germans used to was has changed, Mawruss, it wouldn't surprise me in the least if the old habit the Germans had for drinking beer was just a bluff, y'understand, and that at heart they was prohibitionists to a man. In fact, Abe, if I would be a German Bolshevik with instructions to shoot the Kaiser on sight, I should go gunning for a short, stout man with a tooth-brush mustache and a holy horror of wearing uniforms, because it's my opinion that all them so-called portraits of the Kasier was issued for the purpose of misleading anarchists to shoot at a thin man in a heavily embroidered uniform with spike-end mustaches."

"Well, whatever he looks like, Mawruss," Abe

said, "if I was him, rather than have such a terrible fate hanging over me, y'understand, I would telegraph to Berlin for them to send along a good shot while they was about it, and have the thing over with quick, Mawruss."

"Say!" Morris exclaimed. "You and me should have hanging over us the life which the Kaiser is going to lead from now on! For two hundred and fifty dollars a week at a Pallum Beach hotel you could only get a very small idea of the hardships the Kaiser will got to undergo in the future, Abe."

"But do you mean to told me that after what happened to that English lady in Brussels and the captain of the English mail-boat, Mawruss, the English ain't going to persecute the Kaiser?" Abe demanded.

"*You*—the English would persecute the Kaiser!" Morris exclaimed. "Don't you know that the Kaiser's mother was the King of England's father's sister? Do you suppose for a moment that the King of England wants a convict in the family?"

"Well, has he got any *mishbocha* in France, Mawruss?" Abe asked. "Because if not, Mawruss, it seems to me that now, while all the witnesses is in Paris, it wouldn't be a bad idea to get the March term of the Paris County grand jury to hand down an indictment for murder with intent to kill or something."

'That sounds reasonable to anybody not connected with this here Peace Conference, Abe," Morris admitted, "but it seems that the Com-

mittee for Fixing Responsibility says that if they was to hang or shoot the Kaiser it would give him an awful drag with the German people, and they don't want the Kaiser to get popular again, dead or alive. Their idea is to punish him by letting him live on to be an outcast among all the people of the earth, except the proprietors of first-class European hotels, dealers in high-grade automobiles, expensive jewelry storekeepers, fashionable tailors, and a couple of million other people who don't attach an awful lot of importance to the moral character of anybody which wants to enjoy life and has got the money to do it with. In other words, Abe, they claim that, in leaving the Kaiser to his conscience and his bank-account they are punishing him a whole lot worse as hanging him or shooting him."

"And I suppose that same committee is going to sentence von Tirpitz to six months at Monte Carlo, while Ludendorff will probably be confined to a Ritz hotel eight hours a day for the rest of his natural life," Abe suggested.

"The committee claims not," Morris replied. "It seems that the Kaiser's ministers—like von Tirpitz and Ludendorff—is going to get what is coming to them, on the grounds that they are guilty of violations of international law and 'ain't got no relations among the royal families of England or Italy."

"But why not bring the whole fleet over to America, and let the authorities dispose of them there?" Abe inquired.

"The Kaiser would be just as much a martyr if he was sentenced in America as in Europe," Morris replied.

"Who says anything about sentencing him?" Abe demanded. "All it would be necessary to do would be to swear out a warrant against him and leave the rest to a couple of headquarters detectives, which, naturally, when them fellers would tell him to come along with them, the Kaiser would technically resist the arrest by asking what for. This would mean at the very least ten stitches in his scalp, Mawruss, not reckoning a couple of broken ribs or so when the fingerprints was taken, and, while it wouldn't be only a starter in the way of punishment, he would anyhow find out that it is one thing to be actually engaged in a modern battle, and that looking at it through a high-power telescope while sitting in a bomb-proof limousine six miles away is absolutely something else again. Later on, Mawruss, when a New York police-court lawyer visited him in his cell after the Kaiser had lunched on bread and water and the police-court lawyer on what used to be called *Koenigsburger Klops* and is now known as Liberty Roast, understand me, the Kaiser would get just an inkling of what it means to be caught in a gas attack without a gas-mask."

"You talk like you would got a little experience in the way of sitting in prison yourself, Abe," Morris commented.

"I am giving you what practically happened to

a feller by the name Immerglick which was arrested by mistake on account the police thought he looked like an Italian who was wanted for barrel murder, Mawruss," Abe exclaimed, "and if the police behaves this way to a perfect stranger which is innocent at that, Mawruss, you could imagine what them fellers would do to a well-known guilty party like the Kaiser. But that's neither here nor there, Mawruss. What I am trying to do is to work out a punishment proposition for the Kaiser which would get by with such a sensitive bunch as this here committee to place responsibility seems to be."

"Go ahead and have a good time with your pipe-dream, Abe," Morris said. "You couldn't make me feel bad, no matter what happens to the Kaiser in your imagination."

"Well," Abe continued, "after he is through with trying to get rid of the police-court lawyer, Mawruss, he should ought to be arranged before the magistrate in a traffic court, y'understand, and should be accused of driving at the rate of twenty-two miles an hour, which is two miles past the legal speed limit, and then he would find out that all them commandants of Ruhleben and the other German prison camps wasn't even new beginners in the art of making prisoners feel cheap, because you take one of these here traffic-court magistrates which has had years of experience bawling out respectable sitsons who has got the misfortune to own automobiles, Mawruss, and what such a feller wouldn't do to

humilitate the Kaiser, y'understand, ain't even dreamt of in German prison camps yet."

"I see you still feel sore about getting fined twenty-five dollars for driving like a maniac down at Far Rockaway last summer Abe," Morris commented.

"How I feel or how I don't feel hain't got nothing to do with it, Mawruss," Abe retorted. "And furthermore, Mawruss, any motor-cycle policeman which has got the nerve to swear that he could tell inside of two miles an hour how fast somebody is driving, understand me, is guilty of perjury on the face of it, which I told the judge. 'Judge, your Honor,' I says, 'I admit I was going fast,' I says, 'but—'"

"Excuse me," Morris interrupted, "but I thought you was talking about how to punish the Kasier, ain't it, which, while I admit you got some pretty good ideas on the subject, Abe, still at the same time there is plenty of ways that the Kaiser could get punished in America without going to the trouble and expense of arresting him first, Abe. There is a whole lot of experiences which the American people pays to go through just once, y'understand, which if the Kaiser could be persuaded to take them all on, one after the other, Abe, his worst enemies would got to pity him. Supposing, for instance, he would start off with one of them electric vibrating face massages, Abe, and if he comes through it alive, y'understand, he would then be hustled off to one of these here strong-arm bunkopathic physicians,

which charges five dollars for the first visit and never has to quote rates for the second or third visits, because once is plenty, y'understand."

"But I thought the idea was not to let anybody have any sympathy for the Kaiser, Mawruss," Abe broke in.

"Plenty of fellers I know goes to these here near-doctors," Morris declared, "and nobody has got any sympathy for them, neither. Also, Abe, I 'ain't got no sympathy for anybody who goes to these here restaurants where they run off a cabarattel review, Abe, and yet it's a terrible punishment at that, so there's another tip for you if you want any more ideas for making the Kaiser suffer."

"Say, when it comes right down to it, Mawruss, and if you don't want to show the feller no mercy at all, y'understand," Abe said, "what's the matter with making him see some of them war plays they was putting on in New York last winter?"

"Why only *war* plays?" Morris asked. "I sat through a couple musical shows last winter without the option of a fine, y'understand, and it would be a good thing if the Kaiser could see performances like that—just to make him realize that in losing his throne, y'understand, he has no longer got the power to order the actors shot, together with the composer and the man that wrote the jokes."

"But the biggest punishment of all you 'ain't even hinted at yet," Abe said, "and it's a punishment which thousands of Americans is getting

right now without no sympathy from nobody, which its name is:

"'Form 1040. United States Internal Revenue Service

INDIVIDUAL INCOME TAX RETURN

For Net Incomes of More than $5,000

FOR CALENDAR YEAR, 1918.'

Also, Mawruss, when you consider what the Kaiser done, Mawruss, I ask you is it too much that the Committee on Fixing Responsibility should order him starved to death or talked to death or any other slow and painful death, because such a fate is going to be a happy one compared with the thousands of decent, respectable American business men which is headed straight for an insane-asylum, trying to fill out

"'(a) Totals taxable at 1918 rates (see instructions page 2 under C).

(b) Totals taxable at 1917 rates (see instructions, included in K (a) page 2.

(c) Amount of stock dividends (column 4) taxable at 1916 rates (enter as 20).'"

"Well, after all, Abe," Morris said, "there's one worser punishment you could hand out the Kaiser than filling out this here income tax."

"What's that?" Abe inquired.

"Paying it," Morris said.

VIII

IT ENTERS ON ITS NO-GOLD-CASKET PHASE

"WHEN a feller gets his name in the papers as often as Mr. Wilson, Mawruss, it don't take long for them highwaymen to get on to him," Abe Potash remarked, shortly after Mr. Wilson's return to Paris.

"What highwaymen?" Morris inquired.

"Them presidents of orphan-asylums and homes," Abe said, "and in a way it serves Mr. Wilson right, Mawruss, because, instead of keeping it to himself that he got stuck over four thousand dollars for tips alone while he was in France, y'understand, as soon as he arrived in Boston he goes to work and blabs the whole thing to newspaper reporters, and you could take it from me, Mawruss, that for the next six months Mr. Wilson would be flooded with letters from Associations for the Relief of Indignant Armenians, Homes for Chronic Freemasons, and who knows what else. So therefore you take this here Carter H. Glass, Mawruss, and he naturally comes to the conclusion that Mr. Wilson is an easy mark, because—"

"Excuse me, Abe," Morris interrupted, coldly,

"but who do you think this here Carter H. Glass is, anyway?"

"I don't know," Abe went on, "but whoever he is he probably figured that if he was going to get turned down he would anyhow get turned down big, because it says here in the paper that he cables Mr. Wilson he should please let him have three million dollars for this here Bureau for Paying Allowances to the Relations of Soldiers and—"

"Listen, Abe," Morris said, "if you wouldn't know who Carter H. Glass is after paying twelve per cent. on all you made over four thousand dollars last year, y'understand, nothing that I could say would ever learn you, so therefore I 'ain't got no expectations that you are going to remember it when I tell you that this here Carter H. Glass is Secretary of the Treasurer, and when he cabled Mr. Wilson for three million dollars, it ain't so hopeless like it sounds. Also, Abe, while Mr. Wilson gives it out to the papers that he got stung four thousand dollars for tips, it also appears in the papers that he came home with a few gold caskets and things, not to mention one piece of tapestry which the French government presented him with, valued at two hundred thousand dollars alone, y'understand, and if that kind of publicity is going to give Mr. Wilson a reputation as an easy giver-up, Abe, all I can say is that the collectors for orphan-asylums and homes don't read the papers no more carefully than you do, Abe."

"But why should the Secretary of the United

States Treasury got to touch Mr. Wilson for?" Abe demanded. "Every day the people of the United States is paying into the United States Treasury millions and millions dollars income-tax money and all the President owns is a few gold caskets which he got presented with, and maybe a little tapestry, y'understand. What's the matter with that feller Carter H. Glass? Is he afraid he is going to run short if he spends a couple million dollars or so? Has he lost his nerve or something?"

"Well, I'll tell you, Abe," Morris began. "The Secretary of the Treasury 'ain't got such a cinch like some people think, y'understand. If the Bureau for Paying Allowances to the Relations of Soldiers send over and asks the Secretary of the Treasury to be so good and let 'em have for a few days three million dollars, understand me, you would naturally think that it is one of them dead open-and-shut, why-certainly propositions. The impression you have is that the Secretary grabs ahold of the 'phone and says to the head of stock to look on the third shelf from the elevator shaft is there any more of them million-dollar bills with the picture of Rutherford B. Hayes on 'em left, and if not, to send Jake up with three hundred of them three-by-seven-inch ten-thousand-dollar bills, and that's all there is to it. But as a matter of fact he doesn't do nothing of the kind, because nobody could get any money out of the Secretary of the Treasury except by an act of Congress."

"Well, it's nothing against Mr. Glass that he is such a tight-wad, Mawruss, because that's the kind of man to have as Secretary of the Treasurer, Mawruss, which supposing they had one of them easy-come, easy-go fellers for Secretary of the Treasurer, Mawruss—somebody who would fall for every hard-luck story he hears, y'understand, and how long is it going to be before the police is asking him what did he done with it all?" Abe said. "So, for my part, Mawruss, they could abuse Mr. Glass all they want to, y'understand, but I would be just as well satisfied, so far as my income taxes is concerned, if the only way you could get money out of him was by a miracle instead of an act of Congress. Am I right or wrong?"

"Do me the favor, Abe," Morris said, "and don't talk a lot of nonsense about a subject about which you don't know nothing about, because when I say that nobody could get money out of Carter H. Glass except by an act of Congress, y'understand, I ain't talking poetical in a manner of speaking. They must actually got to got and act of Congress before anybody could get any money out of the Secretary of the Treasury, no matter if Mr. Glass would be the most generous feller in existence, which, for all I know, he *might* be. So, therefore, Abe, when Congress adjourned without passing the acts which was necessary in order that the Secretary of the Treasury should pay the railroads seven hundred and fifty million dollars to keep 'em going, y'understand, not to

mention such chicken-feed like three million dollars for this here Soldiers' Relations Bureau and the like, it leaves the country practically broke with seven or eight billion dollars in the bank. *Now* do you understand what I am driving into?"

"I think I do," Abe said, "but explain it to me just as if I didn't, because what is a mystery to me is, why did Congress adjourn without passing them acts, Mawruss?"

"They did it to put Mr. Wilson in bad on account he went to Europe without calling an extra session," Morris said.

"I thought Congress got paid by the year and not by the session," Abe remarked.

"So they do," Morris continued, "but they said they wanted to stay in session while Mr. Wilson was in Europe to *help* him, and Mr. Wilson thought they wanted to stay in session while he was in Europe to *knock* him, and he said: 'Watch! I'll fix them fellers,' and *they* said: 'Watch! *We'll* fix that feller.' And between the two of them, the railroads is left dry and high, the War Risks Bureau claims that they could only keep going for a week or so, the Soldiers' Relations people is sending out J O S signals, and that's the way it goes."

"And who do you think is right, Mawruss?" Abe asked. "Mr. Wilson or Congress?"

"Well, I ain't exactly prepared to say, y'understand," Morris replied, "but it's a question in my mind whether or not there ain't just so much need for a Peace Conference in Washington as there

is in Paris, and if so, Abe, whether Mr. Wilson ain't at the wrong Peace Conference."

"So far as that goes, Mawruss," Abe said, "he might just so well be in Washington as in Paris, because the tapestry and gold-casket period of this here Conference is already a thing of the past, which I see that Mr. Wilson ain't even staying with the Murats no longer."

"Naturally," Morris said, "after the way this here Murat went around talking about the League of Nations."

"Why, I thought he was in favor of it!" Abe said.

"He was in favor of it," Morris said, "up to the time Mr. Wilson and Lord George had the conference with the Jugo-Slobs where they laid out the frontiers by making the ink-bottle represent Bessarabia and the mucilage-bottle Macedonia. When Murat saw the library carpet the next morning, he began to say that, after all, why shouldn't France control her own foreign policy."

"I don't blame him," Abe commented.

"Later on the Polish National Committee called on Mr. Wilson and was shown into the parlor before the butler had a chance to put the slip covers on the furniture," Morris continued, "and that very evening Murat went around saying that if France was going to have to police the corridor through West Prussia to Dantzig, he was against articles fourteen to twenty, both inclusive, of the League constitution, and where could he find a good dry-cleaner."

"That don't surprise me, neither," Abe remarked.

"But it wasn't till the President's body-guard of secret-service men had an all-night stud-poker session in the yellow guest-room that he actually made speeches against the League of Nations," Morris went on, "and at that, the room will never look the same again."

"I wonder if there ain't some kind of property-damage insurance that he could have took out against a thing happening like that?" Abe speculated.

"I don't know," Morris said, "but if there is, you can bet your life that this here Mrs. Bischoffsheim, where the President is staying now, has got it."

"And she is going to need it, Mawruss," Abe said, "because what the best home-trained men do with cigarettes and fountain-pens, when their minds are occupied with business matters, ain't calculated to improve the appearance of a barroom, neither."

"Say!" Morris commented. "The President *oser* cares what his address is in Paris, but I'll bet you he is doing a lot of thinking as to what it is going to be in Washington after March 4, 1921."

"It ain't a question of who is going to move *out* of the White House, Mawruss," Abe said. "What people in America is wondering is, Who is going to move *in*, which right now there is a couple of generals, five or six Senators, and a banker or so

which is figuring on not renewing the leases of their apartments beyond March 3, 1921, in case they should be obliged to go to Washington for four years, or maybe eight."

"Lots of things can happen before the next presidential election," Morris said.

"That's what these Senators and generals thinks," Abe agreed, "and in the mean time, Mawruss, nobody has got to press them a whole lot to speak at dinners and conventions, which I see that a general made a speech at a meeting in memory of Grover Cleveland the other day where he didn't refer once to Mr. Wilson, but said that Mr. Cleveland wasn't an expert at verbal messages and believed in the Monroe Doctrine."

"Well, suppose the general did say that," Morris said. "What *of* it?"

"Nothing of it," Abe replied; "but on the other hand, if this here general had gone a bit farther, understand me, and said that Grover Cleveland never refused to meet Judge Cohalan at the Metropolitan Opera House and as a general rule didn't act cold toward a Sinn Fein committee, Mawruss, you would got to admit that such remarks is anyhow suspicious, ain't it?"

"All it is suspicious of to me, Abe," Morris said, "is that if such a general has got ambitions to be President, y'understand, he ain't going the right way about it, because fashions in opinions changes like fashions in garments, Abe. At this day and date nobody could tell no more about

what the people of the United States is going to think in the fall of 1920 as what they are going to wear in the fall of 1920, which it would of been a whole lot better for the general's prospects if he would of said that Grover Cleveland was just as expert at verbal messages as another great American and believed just as strongly in a League of Nations. In fact, Abe, if there was, Heaven forbid, a chance of me being nominated for President in 1920, I would lay pipes for claiming that it was me that suggested the whole idea of the League of Nations to President Wilson in the first place. Am I right or wrong?"

"You're right about the Heaven forbid part, anyway," Abe commented.

"Because," Morris continued, as though he had not heard the interruption, "what between the people who are willing to take President Wilson's word for it and the people who ain't willing to take a United States Senator's word for anything, y'understand, this here League of Nations looks like a pretty safe proposition for any politician to tie up to, and it wouldn't surprise me in the least if even some of them Senators which signed the round robin would be claiming just before the 1920 National Conventions that they was never what you might call actually against a League of Nations except, as one might say, in a manner of speaking, if you know what I mean. Also, Abe, these here Senators which is now acting like they would have sworn a solemn oath, in addition to the usual amount of swearing about

such things, that they would never ratify this here League of Nations, y'understand, are already beginning to say that they wouldn't ratify it anyhow in its present form, understand me, and before they got through, Abe, you could take it from me, that when it finally comes up for ratification them same Senators is going to go over it again carefully and find that it has been amended by inserting two commas in Article two and a semicolon in Article twenty-five, and a glad shout of 'Oh, well, this is something else again!' will go up, understand me, and after they vote to unanimously ratify it they will be telling each other that all you have to do is to make a firm stand against Mr. Wilson and he will back right down."

"The way it looks to me, Mawruss," Abe commented, "the back-down is on the other foot."

"It's fifty-fifty, Abe, because, when the President gets his back up, the Senate starts to back down," Morris concluded, "and *vice versa.*"

IX

WORRYING SHOULD BEGIN AT HOME, AIN'T IT?

"I SEE where the Italian delegates to the Peace Conference says that if Italy don't get Fiume, Mawruss, there would be a revolution in Italy," Abe Potash remarked to his partner, Morris Perlmutter.

"Any excuse is better than none," Morris Perlmutter commented, "which it is very clear to me, Abe, that with the example of Poland in front of them, the Italians being also a musical people and seeing that Poland has got it a first-class A-number-one pianist like Paderewski for a President, y'understand, they are taking the opportunity of Fiume to put in Caruso or Scotti or one of them fellers as President."

"They would got to offer their Presidents an awful big salary if they expect to compete with the Metropolitan Opera House, Mawruss," Abe said.

"If Poland could do it, Abe, why couldn't Italy?" Morris said. "Which Paderewski didn't have to tune pianos on the side to make a living over here, neither, Abe, and, besides, Abe, if they would let Caruso have a free hand in the formation of his Cabinet, he would probably get a good

barytone for Secretary of State, a basso for Secretary of Commerce and Labor, De Luca for Secretary of the Treasury, Martinelli for Secretary of War, and draw on the Chicago Opera Company for Secretaries of the Navy, the Interior, and Agriculture. After that, Abe, all the Italian government would got to do would be to move the capital to Milan and hold open sessions of the Cabinet at the Scala with a full orchestra, and they could take in from ten to twenty thousand dollars at the door, daily, in particular if they was to advertise that Caruso would positively appear at every session of the Cabinet, y'understand."

"But, joking to one side, Mawruss," Abe declared, "while personally I got to admit that up to a short time ago, for all I knew about Fiume, y'understand, if somebody would of said to me suddenly, 'Fiume,' I would have said, 'Fiume yourself, you dirty loafer!' and the chances is there would have been a fight then and there, understand me. Still, I couldn't help thinking that as between old friends like the Italians and perfect strangers like the Jugo-Slobs, y'understand, Italy should ought to have Fiume and anything else she wants within reason and even a couple of places not within reason, if she wants them that bad."

"In deciding these things, Abe," Morris said, "Mr. Wilson couldn't consider prejudice."

"No?" Abe retorted. "Well, could he consider who discovered America? A Jugo-Slob, I suppose, what? But never mind going so far back as

Christopher Columbus, Mawruss. Take our best workmen right in our own shop, Mawruss—them Tonies and them Roccos with all the time a pleasant smile no matter how hard we work them, and what are they? Jugo-Slobs or Italians? Take it in the city of New York alone, and do we get there half a million Jugo-Slobs or half a million Italians? I am asking you? Also, Mawruss, I suppose the American people is crazy to see Jugo-Slob opera, with wonderful Jugo-Slob singers and composed by Jugo-Slob composers, ain't it? Furthermore, Mawruss, when you want to give your wife a treat, you take her out and blow her to a good Jugo-Slob *table d'hôte*, one dollar and a half including wine—what?"

"Listen, Abe," Morris protested, "I didn't say a word that Italy shouldn't have Fiume."

"I know you didn't," Abe said, "but there's a whole lot of people which does, Mawruss, and how they expect to use it for an argument to get the millions of Italians in America to subscribe to the next Victory Loan, Mawruss, may be perfectly clear to them, Mawruss, but *I* couldn't see it and I doubt if them millions of Italians will be able to see it, neither."

"Probably you ain't wrong exactly," Morris said, "but whichever way Mr. Wilson thinks is the best for the good of Europe, Abe, that's the way he would decide it about Fiume."

"Well, I'll tell you, Mawruss," Abe observed, "while I consider that Europe, excepting the coffee they give you for breakfast, is a high-grade

continent, taking it by and large, still at the same time I ain't so fanatical about it that if I would be President Wilson, I wouldn't once in a while give America a look-in also. Furthermore, Mawruss, admitting that Mr. Wilson is acting wonderful in the way he is unselfish about America, y'understand, and that he would probably go down in history as a great and good man, y'understand, he should ought to watch out that he don't act *too* unselfish about America, Mawruss, otherwise he would be going down as a great and good man in French and English history and not in American history."

"There is even some people which figures that he would be a great man in the history of the world even," Morris interrupted.

"Sure, I know," Abe said, "and that's the trouble with a whole lot of people these days, Mawruss. They are figuring on world propositions, and what goes on in the next block don't interest them at all. Worrying should begin at home, Mawruss, whereas with them world thinkers they couldn't get really and truly anxious about the way things is going anywheres nearer to the Woolworth Building than the Nevski Prospekt. 'Ain't you ashamed of yourselves to be kicking about not having a job,' they says to the returning American soldiers, 'when thousands of muzhiks in Ukrania is idle.' And they go to work and collect dollar after dollar for milk to feed Czecho-Slovak babies, with sixty cents after sixty cents overhead on the collection, y'understand, while

right here in New York City families with an income of eighteen dollars a week has got to pay twenty cents a quart for grade B milk when the milk-wagon drivers ain't on strike."

"People has become European-Americans from reading too much newspapers nowadays, Abe," Morris said, "which in these times of one newspaper trying to show the others how much more money it is spending for foreign cables, y'understand, if you want to see who is murdered in your own town, understand me, you are liable to find a couple of lines about it 'most any part of the paper except in the first four pages, and the consequences is that people gets the impression from reading the papers that a strike in Berlin is ever so much more important than a strike in Hoboken for the simple reason that as the Berlin strike cost the newspaper proprietor several hundred dollars for cables, he put it on the front page, whereas the strike in Hoboken only cost him seven cents car fare for the reporter each way, and therefore it gets slipped in on the eleventh page with over it the head-line: 'PLAN AMERICAN ORCHESTRA. Chicago's New Philharmonic Is Headed by Mrs. J. Ogden Armour,' the orchestra story with the strike head-line having failed to get into the paper at all."

"Well, I'll tell you," Abe said, "people which reads the newspapers don't take the same amount of interests in strikes like they once used to did before the United States government organized them Conciliation and Arbitration Boards, which

nowadays strikes is long, dull affairs consisting of the first strike, the arbitration, the decision, the second strike, the arbitration, the decision, the third strike, and so on for several months, because that's the trouble with arbitration, Mawruss: everybody is willing to arbitrate and nobody is willing to be decided against."

"Also strikes is becoming too common, Abe," Morris said. "Everybody is going on strike nowadays, from milk-wagon drivers to the United States Senate, and although the last strike only *begun* as a strike and ended up as a lock-out, y'understand, still the example wasn't good to the country, which if the strike fever is going to spread as high up as the United States Senate, Abe, where is it going to stop? The first thing you know, the members of the Metropolitan Club will be going on strike for a minimum of six hundred sturgeon eggs in a ten-dollar portion of fresh Astrakhan caviar, and the Amalgamated Bank Presidents of America, New York Local No. 1, will be walking out in a body for a minimum wage of fifty thousand dollars a year, with a maximum working year of four months."

"But even when strikes had no foreign competition in the newspapers, Mawruss," Abe said, "the interest in them soon died out, which very few people outside the parties concerned ever finds out when a strike ends or who wins, and you might even say gives a nickel one way or the other, Mawruss."

"It ain't only strikes which affects people like

that, Abe," Morris commented. "Long-drawn-out murder trials and graft investigations also suffers that way, which I bet yer the American newspaper-reading people will soon get on to the fact that the newspapers is playing up to their cable tolls, y'understand, and everybody will be starting in to read the paper at the fourth or fifth page."

"Still, I think that considerable interest was revived in the League of Nations and the Peace Conference by the argument that Senator Lodge put up last week in Lowell, Massachusetts," Abe said.

"It wasn't *in* Lowell, but *with* Lowell," Morris corrected.

"In or with," Abe said, "it caused a whole lot of comment in the newspapers, and the people which bought the next morning them papers that printed the whole affair in full, Mawruss, skipped as much as two or three pages about it."

"Well, they didn't miss much, Abe," Morris said, "because it didn't come up to the advertisement."

"What do you mean—the advertisement?" Abe inquired.

"Why, for days already, the newspapers come out with a notice that Senator Lodge would argue with this here Lowell, which he is a college president and not a town, Abe, the argument to take place in a big hall in Boston, and the application for tickets was something tremendous, Abe, because you know how arguments about the League of

Nations is, Abe. Sometimes the parties only use language and sometimes the smaller one of the two goes to a hospital, understand me. But, however, in this case it must be that the friends of Senator Lodge must have went to him and said: 'What do you want to get into an argument with Lowell for? Treat him with contempt. What do you care *what* he says about you? You are *doch* a United States Senator, ain't it?' And the friends of this here Lowell also must have went to him and said: 'Listen, Lowell, don't make a show of yourself. If Lodge wants to behave himself that way, all right; he's only a United States Senator, but you are anyhow president of Harvard College, and you can't afford to *act* that way.' 'Act *what* way?' Lowell probably said. 'Do you think I am going to sit down and let him walk all over Wilson, which Wilson and me was presidents of colleges together for years already?'"

"And besides a college president don't make such big money that he could afford to sneeze at his share of the gate receipts, neither," Abe commented.

"Be that as it may," Morris said, "they probably figured that it was too late to call the thing off, but their friends must have got them together and talked Lodge over into behaving like a gentleman, because he practically agreed to everything that Lowell said and, so to speak, 'threw' the whole debate right at the outset, which, reading the reports in the newspapers next morning, Abe,

it is a wonder to me that the referee or the umpire didn't stop it before it had gone the first five minutes, even."

"Well, if people is foolish enough to bet on such things, Mawruss," Abe commented, "they deserve to lose, ain't it?"

"So the consequences is that some people is now saying that Senator Lodge backed down because he didn't have a leg to stand on," Morris continued, "while them people which probably made a little easy money on Lowell is saying, '*Yow!* backed down!' and that Lowell is a crackerjack, A-number-one arguer, and won the argument on his merits, y'understand."

"The whole thing should ought to be investigated by the Massachusetts Boxing Commission in order to see that them kind of disgraceful exhibitions shouldn't occur again," Abe said, "otherwise this here James Butler which is president of Columbia College will fix up an argument with another United States Senator, and whoever is now president of Princeton College will arrange a frame-up with a Governor of a state or somebody, and the first thing you know, Mawruss, college presidents will be getting such a reputation as public speakers that the next Republican National Convention will be again unloading a college president on us as President of the United States."

"Say," Morris protested, "if all college presidents would make as good a President as Mr. Wilson done, Abe, I am content that we should have such a president for President."

"President Wilson done all right, Mawruss," Abe declared. "He done a whole lot to add a touch of refinement to what otherwise would of been a very rough war, understand me. He's got the respect and admiration of the whole world, Mawruss, and I ain't going to say *but* neither, but would say *however*. Mawruss, for the next ten years or so the United States of America ain't going to be as quiet as a college exactly. Maybe the presidents of colleges will continue to deal with college professors and college students which couldn't talk back, Mawruss, but the next President of the United States will have to stand an awful lot of back-talk from a whole lot of people about taxes, business conditions, railroads, and so forth, and instead of coming right back with a snappy remark originally made by some big Roman philosopher and letting it go at that, Mawruss, he would got to come right back with a plan devised by some big Pittsburgh business man and act on it, too."

"There's something in what you say, Abe," Morris admitted.

"So, therefore, if we've got to drag a college president for President, Mawruss," Abe concluded, "let's hope he would be anyhow president of a business college."

X

THE NEW HUNGARIAN RHAPSODY

"I SEE where a feller by the name Rubin or Robin or something like that, which was working as a traveling-salesman for the Red Cross in Russia, got examined by Congress the other day," Abe Potash said one morning in March, "and in the course of explaining how he come to spend all that money for traveling expenses or something, he says that the Bolsheviki in Russia is a very much misunderstood people."

"Sure, I know," Morris said; "it is always the case, Abe, that when somebody does something which could only be explained on the grounds that he would sooner be in jail than *out*, he goes to work and claims that nobody understands him."

"But Rubin claims that the reason Bolshevism sprung in the first place was that the Bolsheviki was tired of the war," Abe continued, "whereas the Allies thought they were quitters."

"What do you mean—whereas?" Morris asked.

"Wait, that ain't the only 'whereas,'" Abe said. "Rubin also said that the Allies thinks the Bolsheviki is a bunch of organized murderers, *whereas* the Allies don't understand that the only

people murdered by them Bolsheviki was the property-owners which objects to their property being taken, and that as a matter of fact them poor Bolsheviki are simply *obliged* to take the property, there being no other alternative except working for a living."

"*Nebich!*" Morris exclaimed, "and did he say anything else about them Bolsheviki that we should ought to break our hearts over, Abe?"

"Rubin didn't, but there is some of these here liberal-minded papers which seems to think that what this here Rubin says is not only a big boost for the Bolsheviki, but that it should ought to be a lesson to us not to pass laws in this country to prevent the Bolsheviki from operating over here."

"But we already got laws over here to take care of people which would sooner commit murder than work, Abe," Morris said, "and as for being liberal-minded about the Bolsheviki, Abe, I am content that after they are sentenced they should have all the privilege that the other convicts have, and that's as far as I would go."

"Well, you couldn't claim credit for being very funny that way, Mawruss. You've got practically all the unliberal-minded people in the United States siding with you," Abe declared, "because, being liberal-minded is a matter of being able to see only the unpopular side of every question. It is the liberal-minded people which thinks there is something to be said in favor of the Germans and says it, y'understand. It is the liberal-minded people which is always willing to

try anything that don't seem reasonable to practically everybody."

"And I suppose them liberal-minded people would even approve of Germany trying to get out of paying an indemnity by pulling off one of them street affairs with shooting which passes for Bolshevik revolution," Morris said, "but the backing of such liberal-minded Americans wouldn't help the Germans none, because there would be a whole lot of husky parties in khaki going into Germany and acting in such an unliberal-minded way that the Germans would wish they would have paid the indemnity voluntarily on the instalment plan rather as have it collected all in one sum by levy and sale under an execution."

"Well, I'll tell you," Abe said, "it is always the case that when the creditors begin to scrap among themselves, y'understand, the fraudulent bankrupt stands a good chance to get away with the concealed assets, ain't it, and in particular in this case where there is so many liberal-minded people around which don't want to be too hard on Germany, *anyway*."

"I bet yer," Morris said, fervently; "and while this here Peace Conference is killing a whole lot of time deliberating how to make this the last war, y'understand, they will wake up some fine morning to find out that they have really made it the last war but one. Furthermore, Abe, this next-to-the-last war wouldn't be a marker to the war we are going to have in collecting indemnities from Bolsheviki, because when it comes to atroc-

ities, Abe, a Bolshevik government could make the old German government look like the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, y'understand."

"Might the Peace Conference would hurry up, maybe," Abe suggested.

"They've got to hurry up if they don't want to be shifted from a Peace Conference to a Council of War," Morris said. "Look what has already happened in Hungary."

"And yet, Mawruss, you would think that with a nation like the Hungarians, which is used to eating in Hungarian restaurants, y'understand, a little thing like starvation wouldn't worry them at all," Abe said, "so therefore I couldn't understand why the Hungarians should have gone Bolshevik from want of food, as the papers says they did."

"*My* paper didn't say it," Morris commented, "and if it did, I wouldn't believe it, anyway, because the most you could claim for Bolshevism as a cure for starvation is that it keeps the patient so busy worrying about his other troubles that he forgets how hungry he is. Furthermore, Abe, the way it looks to me, this here Bolshevik revolution in Hungary ain't even what the Poor Food Law would call a Bolshevik Type revolution, because it is my idea that Lenine and Trotzky could read the papers the same like anybody else. So, therefore, when they seen it that all the American newspaper correspondents was sending out word that the Peace Conference should ought

to hurry up its work because of the spread of Bolshevism, y'understand, and that the delegates should ought to go easy on Germany because, if they didn't, Germany would probably go Bolshevik, y'understand, this here Trotzky, which once used to work on a New York newspaper but lived it down by changing his name from Bronstein to Trotzky, understand me, at once gets up a line of snappy advertisements headed:

"'Why Bolshevism?'

to the effect that a Revolution a Day Drives Indemnities Away and for particulars to write to Trotzky & Lenine, Department M, Petrograd Land Title and Trust Building, Petrograd. And, of course, Hungary fell for it."

"So you think that this here Hungarian revolution is a fake?" Abe asked.

"It ain't a fake, it's a business," Morris replied, "which I bet yer that right now Messrs. Ebert, Scheidemann & Co. is writing Trotzky & Lenine they should please quote prices on Bolshevist uprisings as per Hungarian sample, F.O.B. Berlin, and also that it wouldn't be only a matter of a few days when knocking Germany would be a capital offense in Petrograd, upon the grounds that the customer is always right."

"But I understand that in Budapest the working-men is seizing the factories and running them themselves," Abe said.

"There's always bound to be a certain number

of people which couldn't take a job," Morris commented.

"There's no joke about it," Abe declared, "which I see in the paper this morning that the new Hungarian Soviet government has directed the presidents of banks to put their business in the hands of the clerks and that the landlords has got to let the janitors manage the apartment-houses."

"The landlords has got to do that in America, whether the government tells 'em to or not, Abe," Morris said, "and as for the bank presidents, Abe, they might just as well go out and look for another job to-day as to wait till next week when them committees of factory-workers will start in to make overdrafts at the point of a revolver."

"Things must be terribly mixed up in Hungary, according to the papers," Abe observed.

"Well, I'll tell you," Morris said, "in some countries a Bolshevik government could be quite disturbing, but take Hungarian cooking, for instance, and it wouldn't really make a whole lot of difference if *gulyas* or paprika chicken was cooked by one chef or a committee of scullions, Abe, it would be just so miscellaneous and nobody could tell from eating it what had been put into it, y'understand. Also, Abe, take these here gipsy Hungarian bands, and while there would probably be a terrible conglomeration of noises if a committee of players was to start in to conduct the Boston Symphonies or the New York Philharmonics, y'understand, a committee of gipsy mu-

sicians couldn't make a *czardas* sound worser than it does, no matter how they disagree as to the way it should ought to be played."

"For that matter, there's a lot of things produced in Germany which a Soviet government couldn't spoil, neither, Mawruss," Abe said, "like music by this here Nathan Strauss, the composer, or *Koenigsburger Klops*, now called Liberty Roast, which I see by last Sunday's paper that the Kaiser has been talking again."

"And what's that got to do with Germany going Bolshevik?" Morris asked.

"Nothing, except that it partially accounts for it," Abe replied, "which a newspaper feller by the name of Begbie called on the Kaiser in Holland, and he says the Kaiser couldn't see it at all."

"See what?" Morris asked.

"Why, he couldn't see what people is making such a fuss about," Abe said. "He says that, so far as starting this here war is concerned, he didn't *say* nothing, he didn't *do* nothing, and all he knows about it is that he lays the whole thing to the Freemasons."

"You mean the F. A. M.?" Morris asked.

"What other Freemasons is there?" Abe said.

"You're sure he didn't say the Knights of Pythias or the I. O. O. F., because, while I don't belong to the Masons myself, Abe, Rosie's sister's husband's brother by the name Harris November has been a thirty-sixth degree Mason for years already," Morris declared, "and I'll swear that if a gabby

feller like him would have known that the Masons had anything to do with bringing on the war, Abe, he would of spilled it already long since ago."

"Well, of course, I don't know nothing about what Harris November said or what he didn't say, Mawruss, but that's what the Kaiser said," Abe continued, "and he also had a good deal to say about Queen Victorine of England what a wonderful woman she was, *olav hasholom*, and how she told him many times he should look out for that low-life of a son of hers by the name Edwin."

"But I always thought this here Edwin was such a decent, respectable feller," Morris interrupted.

"That's what everybody else thought," Abe went on, "but the Kaiser says that many times the old lady says to him he shouldn't have nothing to do with Edwin. 'Believe me,' she said, according to the Kaiser, 'he wouldn't do you no good intellectually, morally, or socially,' and so for that reason the Kaiser wouldn't join the Entente with England, France, and Russia."

"Because this here Edwin was at the bottom of it?" Morris inquired.

"That's what the Kaiser *said*," Abe replied.

"Maybe he also caught the poor Czar *selig* eating with his knife or something," Morris suggested.

"That he didn't say, neither," Abe answered, "but he might just so well have said it, for all it

would go down with me, Mawruss, because we all know how kings sow their rolled oats, Mawruss, and any king which wouldn't associate with any other king on the grounds of running around the streets till all hours of the night or gambling, y'understand, if that ain't a case of a pot calling a kettle, I don't know what is."

"And I suppose he topped off them lies by getting religious, ain't it?" Morris remarked.

"Naturally," Abe said. "And in particular he got very sore at the Freemasons on account of them being atheists."

"That's the first time I hear that about the Freemasons," Morris observed. "I think, myself, that he was getting them mixed up with the Elks."

"The Elks ain't atheists," Abe said.

"I know they ain't, but at the same time they ain't religious fanatics exactly," Morris said, "which to a particular feller like the Kaiser would be quite enough, Abe."

"Also, Mawruss," Abe went on, "he claims that the Freemasons is all Bolshevists, and in fact, from the way he carried on about the Freemasons, you would think he was crazy on the subject."

"Maybe they once turned him down or something," Morris commented, "which when I was treasurer of Friendship Lodge, 129, I. O. M. A., before we quit giving sick benefits, Abe, we turned down a feller by the name Turkeltaub on account of varicose veins, and the way he went around

calling us all kinds of highwaymen you wouldn't believe at all."

"But the newspaper feller that interviewed him says that the Kaiser seems to be in pretty good health, Mawruss," Abe declared.

"That don't make him a good risk, neither," Morris retorted. "I suppose the interviewer didn't say how his appetite was."

"What's his appetite got to do with it?" Abe asked.

"Because, in speaking of murderers just before they go to the chair, Abe," Morris concluded, "the newspaper always say, 'The condemned man ate hearty.'"

XI

IT IS STILL UP IN THE AIR, BUT YOU CAN'T SAY THE SAME FOR TRANSATLANTIC VOYAGES

"I AM surprised to see that an old-established and well-settled government like Mexico should got a revolution on his hands, Mawruss," Abe Potash declared as he skimmed the headlines in the morning papers.

"What makes you think that Mexico is an old-established and well-settled government, Abe?" Morris Perlmutter asked.

"Germany and Hungary do," Abe replied, "which up to the time this here General Blanquet lands the other day in Mexico, people was beginning to say that why couldn't Germany have one last revolution and stick to it and look at Mexico the way she settled down, not having had a single revolution to speak of since January fifteenth, nineteen-nineteen."

"Well, I think the reason why the Mexicans 'ain't had a revolution in so long isn't because they didn't want to, Abe," Morris said, "but because it has taken them all that time to learn the technical terms. You see, a really and truly up-to-date revolution couldn't be run off nowadays, Abe, unless it is one of them Bolshevik

Type revolutions, and in order to get the right kind of newspaper publicity for it the management has got to know enough Russian not to say *soviet* when they mean *mir*. Also I bet yer when it comes to a zemstvo, the Mexicans don't know even now whether you dance it to a guitar and cascanet accompaniment or eat it with garlic and chili sauce."

"A feller could make quite some money nowadays from teaching Russian by mail to revolutionary socialists," Abe commented.

"That ain't necessary in this country, Abe," Morris said, "because the Bolshevik government in Russia has sent over here a feller by the name of Martens to give a course in Bolshevism to American working-men."

"And did our government let him land?" Abe asked.

"Seemingly they did," Morris replied, "which is pretty liberal of our government when you consider that right now we got American soldiers in Russia which is fighting Bolshevism."

"It's even more than liberal, it's crazy," Abe said, "because while I believe in free speech, y'understand, Bolshevik speeches ain't free by a whole lot. Over in Hungary they became payable in thirty, sixty, and ninety days and the only people which ain't ruined by them is the makers and indorsers."

"You are right about the makers, Abe," Morris commented. "For the most part they are a bunch of no-account foreigners which all they

risk by making such speeches is hoarseness, y'understand, but some of the indorsers of such speeches comes from the best American families, and if the time ever comes when there *should* be a little temporary Bolshevik trouble by foreigners in this country who have been encouraged by the liberal attitude of the government to think that the worst which could happen to them would be ten dollars or ten days, y'understand, them indorsers would got to pay the same like any other decent, respectable people which ain't Bolsheviks. Take, for example, in Hungary and the protelariats is making the middle class give up their bath-rooms to the working-people every Saturday night."

"But the protelariats in New York has all got bath-rooms in their tenement-houses, Mawruss," Abe protested.

"I know they have, but they'll probably figure that why should they trouble themselves to empty the coal out of their bath-tubs, which is what them protelariats now use bath-tubs for, Abe, just to save the middle class the inconvenience of changing their bath night from Saturday to Friday," Morris said, "but at the same time, Abe, it don't look to me that a country which has got the modern convenience of America is going to go Bolshevik for the next few hundred years, anyway, because it is my idee that what makes a people become Bolsheviks is the lack of good plumbing and savings-bank accounts, and rather as have the privacy of their bath-rooms

and their savings-bank accounts invaded, the big majority of the American people would declare the United States of America an obsolete monarchy with Ivan D. Ivanovitch, alias John D. Rockafeller, Jr., as the first Czar, understand me."

"Well, if I would be the United States government I wouldn't let a Bolshevik land exactly," Abe declared.

"What do you mean—you wouldn't let him land *exactly?*" Morris asked.

"I mean what I say," Abe said. "I would let him pretty nearly land and then tip up the gang-plank. Also, Mawruss, if I would be the United States government, I would allow free speech, but not free speakers, y'understand, which I would make public speaking a profession the same like lawyers, dentists, or doctors, because if nobody could be a public speaker without taking a four-year course in public speaking and then getting licensed to practise as a public speaker after passing an examination, y'understand, he would think anyhow twice before he says something in public which would bring him up on charges to show cause why he shouldn't have his license to practise as a public speaker taken away from him. In other words, Mawruss, the way I would prevent Bolshevism is that I would make the sheepskin take the place of the soap-box as a necessary article for public speaking, and incidentally in the foreign neighborhoods of our big cities, y'understand, not only would soap-boxes be used for soap, but it would also

go a long way towards making bath-tubs used for bathing."

"At the same time, Abe," Morris said, "I couldn't help thinking that if the feller who talks in public was given less to talk about, y'understand, it would help a whole lot, too, which there wouldn't be nearly so many loafers go into the Bolshevik line if there wasn't so many respectable people engaged in what might be called manufacturing Bolshevik supplies, such as army officers which claims that nobody has a right to kick if a soldier gets ten years' hard labor for using bad grammar in speaking to an officer, y'understand. Also there is a lot of state Legislatures in this country which has seemingly formed themselves into Societies for the Encouragement of Bolshevism by earning, anyhow, the gratitude of canners and cotton manufacturers who have got women and children working for them till all hours of the night, y'understand. Then again there is the perfectly respectable people which would like to make by law a Sunday out of every week-day and a living tomb out of Sunday, understand me, and which would have nobody but themselves to blame if some day they would got to furnish soap and towels for the protelariats in their bath-rooms."

"Well, I'll tell you," Abe said, "Bolshevism as a form of government is pretty nearly exploded, Mawruss. It is now used principally as a threat such as when Germany says if the Polaks get Danzig and West Prussia, y'understand, Germany

would take up Bolshevism, and Paderewski says if the Polaks don't get Danzig, Poland would take up Bolshevism, understand me."

"And Paderewski would take up giving piano lessons to raise enough money to get out of Poland, Abe," Morris commented, "and he would probably have to do so, too, as there ain't much chance of his getting away with that Danzig stuff. Also, Abe, we Americans should ought to be the last to encourage him to think that he will, Abe, because while I don't know how long it is since Danzig, Germany, was Danzig, Poland, I do know that it ain't nearly so long ago as Galveston, Texas, was Galveston, Mexico, y'understand. So, therefore, if Mr. Wilson lets Poland get back Danzig, it wouldn't be long before Mexico would elect Teresa Carreño or Fannie Bloomfield Zeisler as President and claim Galveston with a corridor taking in San Antonio and Houston, understand me."

"Just the same, I am in favor that Germany should have to give up Danzig even if Danzig 'ain't belonged to Poland since 1492 and the only Danzig people now speaking Polish as a regular language is the interpreter of the First District Magistrate's Court for the City and County of Danzig, y'understand," Abe declared. "Furthermore, I think this here Peace Conference is taking it too particular about what Germany should or shouldn't give up, Mawruss, which if the shoe pinched on the other foot, Mawruss, and this here Peace Conference was being held in Berlin or

Vienna, y'understand, with Germany, Austria, Turkey, and Bulgaria as the Big Four, understand me, there wouldn't be any question as to what Allied territory would or wouldn't be given up by the Allies, Mawruss. If Germany would have won the war, Mawruss, she would have taken Calais and Boulogne with as much argument over it as a golluf-player taking a Scotch highball, y'understand, and if France would have threatened to go Bolshevik on account of it, Germany would of said, 'Don't do us no favors,' understand me, and let it go at that. So, therefore, if the people of Danzig couldn't speak Polish, Mawruss, let 'em learn to do so, even if it would be necessary for them to go to a nose and throat specialist till they got used to the pronunciation."

"Say, for my part I am willing that this here Peace Conference should do anything and everything, Abe, just so long as they would get through with their work and I wouldn't have to listen no longer to your nonsense," Morris declared.

"No nonsense at all," Abe protested. "The thing this here Peace Conference should ought to have done from the start was to consider what Germany would have done under the circumstances, put the reverse English on it, and then let her whoop, which I see by the paper that they are now getting ready to make airyoplane journeys across the Atlantic Ocean, Mawruss."

"And what's that got to do with this here Peace Conference?" Morris asked.

"Nothing," Abe said, "except that I see Mr.

Wilson is writing home that they should please send over the *George Washington* in case it should be necessary for him to make good any bluff he might throw to the Peace Conference that if they don't do as he says, he would leave them flat and go back to America. So, therefore, if he has to make good sooner than he thinks, he could go home by airyoplane and not wait for the *George Washington*."

"I don't think that this here transatlantic airyoplane flying is exactly in the President-carrying class just yet, Abe," Morris suggested.

"Neither do I, Mawruss," Abe said, "but the manufacturers of airyoplanes seems pretty confident, Mawruss. In fact, I see in the papers that it won't be but a matter of a few years when the New York business man which has business to do in London, instead of getting on the *Mauretania* in New York and landing six days later in Liverpool, y'understand, would be able to take the railroad to Halifax, Nova Scotia, spend the night there or anyhow only as many nights there as it would be necessary before the steamer sails for Saint John's, Newfoundland, and then take the steamer to Saint John's, Newfoundland, where there would be a passenger airyoplane in waiting and no first-class hotels, y'understand. At Saint John's, such is the strides airyoplane-manufacturing has made, Mawruss, he would probably only have to stick around for five or six days till the airyoplane was in shape to leave, understand me, and in twenty-four hours he

would land at the Azores, where there ain't no hotels at all, understand me. In less than four days more, provided the repairs didn't take longer, he would be on his way to Lisbon, Portugal, which he would reach on the following day or days. There the same airyoplane or another airyoplane, in case the same airyoplane got smashed in landing, would be ready or approximately ready to start for Paris, and might even start, you couldn't tell. On arriving in Paris, he would be only a few hours by railroad and steamer from London, provided he was in shape to travel, which, when you consider that only a few years ago flying was in its infancy, Mawruss, you've got to admit that nobody could ever have dreamed that it was possible to make such a journey."

"Not unless you ate something which disagreed with you before you went to sleep," Morris commented, "and even then, Abe, where is the advantage?"

"It ain't the advantage, it's the novelty of the thing," Abe said, "and I'll bet yer, Mawruss, that if an Airyoplane Company was to open a ticket-office in New York to-morrow, Mawruss, men would be standing in line to buy accommodations on the first available airyoplane—men with wives and families and no life insurance at that."

"They would be the very first ones," Morris agreed, "but the way it looks to me, Abe, New York business men which has not business to do

in London would continue to take twin-screw steamers with bilge keels, no matter how unimportant the business they was going to transact over there might be, because even the stockholders in airyoplane-manufacturing corporations would got to admit that while airyoplane-flying ain't in its infancy, exactly, it ain't in the prime of life, neither. Also, Abe, as long as gas only costs a dollar twenty-five a thousand cubic feet, why should any one want to pull off such a high-priced suicide as these here transatlantic airyoplane voyages is going to be?"

"Anyhow, the first one has still got to be made yet, Mawruss," Abe remarked.

"And even if the tenth one was successful, Abe," Morris concluded, "you could take it from me, this here transatlantic airyoplane navigation ain't going to put much of a crimp into the business of manufacturing seasick remedies. Am I right or wrong?"

XII

THIS HERE VICTORY LIBERTY LOAN

"THE way some people is acting about this here Victory Loan, Mawruss," Abe Potash remarked one morning in April, "you would think that they was all presidents of a first national bank and that this here Carter J. Glass has already made a big overdraft and if he don't like the line of credit they are giving him, he should be so good as to take his account somewheres else, y'understand."

"Them same people probably think that investing their money in any securities bearing interest at less than fifteen per cent. per annum is, so to speak, the equivalence from giving money to orphan-asylums and hospitals, understand me," Morris Perlmutter said. "'We already give them Liberty Loan *schnorrers* two hundred dollars toward the expenses of their rotten war,' they probably say, 'and *still* they ain't satisfied.'"

"And at that they don't mean nothing by it," Abe said, "because there is a whole lot of business men in the United States which couldn't even give up the family housekeeping money every week without anyhow saying to their wives:

'Here, take my blood; take my life. What do you want from me, *anyway?*'"

"Maybe they do and maybe they don't mean nothing by it, Abe," Morris said, "but it would be a whole lot easier for this here Carter J. Glass if everybody would act as his own Victory Bond salesman and try to sell himself just one more bond than he has really got any business buying, y'understand."

"It would be a whole lot easier for this here Carter J. Glass, Mawruss, but it would be practically impossible for pretty nearly everybody else," Abe remarked, "which human nature is so constituted, Mawruss, that the only time a man really and truly uses some high-class, silver-tongued salesmanship on himself is when he is trying to persuade himself that it is all right for him to do something which he knows in his heart it is dead wrong for him to do."

"Well, at least, Abe, in this here Victory Loan Campaign, every man should ought to try to put himself in the place of the salesman which is trying to sell him some of these Victory Bonds," Morris continued, "so we would say, for example, that you would be a Victory Bond salesman, Abe, and you are calling on a feller which he is a pretty tough proposition in such matters by the name of, we would say, for instance, Abe Potash."

"Why don't you make the feller which the salesman is supposed to call on a really and truly hard-boiled egg, by the name, we would say, for instance, Mawruss Perlmutter?" Abe

asked. "Which when you put up to me a hypocritical case, Mawruss, why is it you must always start in by getting insulted already?"

"What do you mean getting insulted?" Morris asked. "I am only putting something up to you for the sake of argument not arguments."

"Well, then, why not be perfectly neuter and call the tough proposition which the Victory Bond salesman is visiting, somebody by the name of a competitor like Leon Sammet, for instance?" Abe suggested.

"Because I am trying to make you put yourself in the place of the Victory Bond salesman who is trying to sell you bonds," Morris declared.

"Put your *own* self in the place of the Victory Bond salesman," Abe exclaimed, "which if you want to give me any hypocritical cases for the sake of argument, Mawruss, I have seen the way you practically snap the head off a collector for a charitable fund enough times to appreciate how you would behave towards a Victory Bond salesman, so go ahead on the basis that you are the tough proposition and not me."

"A charitable fund is one thing and this here Victory Loan another," Morris said.

"I know it is," Abe agreed, "but at the same time, Mawruss, a whole lot of people feels that if ever they give a couple dollars to an orphan-asylum, they practically got vaccinated against future attacks of the same complaint, and if three years later the collector for the orphan-asylum calls on them again they say: 'Why, I already

gave you two dollars for that orphan-asylum! What did you done with it all?' And I bet yer that just as many people considered that the fifty-dollar bond which they bought during the First Liberty Loan Campaign should ought to have set up such a strong antiseptic in their system that they would be immune to all other Liberty Bond Campaigns, no matter if such campaigns would continue until there was, God forbid! a Fiftieth Liberty Loan already."

"Some people never even got, so to speak, jabbed the first time," Morris observed, "and the way they avoid Liberty Bond salesmen, Abe, you would think that such a salesman was a sort of Liberty Bond Typhoid Mary and would infect them tightwads with a disease where they were liable to break out all over with coupons or something."

"As a matter of fact, Mawruss, that's just the effect which a Liberty Bond salesman should ought to have on the right kind of sitson," Abe said, "which while I don't mean to say that making a good investment like buying of a Liberty Bond should ought to be considered as a disease, Mawruss, it should anyhow be infectious and should ought to spread so rapidly that everybody in the United States could say they had it to the extent of at least one fifty-dollar bond of the Victory Loan."

"But there is over a hundred million people in the United States, Abe," Morris said, "and if they all bought one fifty-dollar bond, y'under-

stand, it would make the Victory Loan five billion dollars, whereas this here Carter J. Glass is only asking for four billion five hundred million."

"Well, to my mind, he's acting too modest, Mawruss," Abe went on, "because if we expect Germany to raise the first five billion dollars of her indemnity with nothing to show for it but the promise that she would have to raise five billion more every two years till the whole indemnity was paid, understand me, how much more should we raise over here with the promise that it is going to be paid back to us in a few years, with interest at the rate of four and three-quarters per cent. per annum? Why, under them conditions, Mawruss, any American which would refuse to buy a Victory Loan Bond should ought to be considered as applying for German sitsonship papers and should ought to be exported to Hamburg, where his adopted fellow-sitsons is getting frisked by the German government for every cent they possess and ain't getting so much as a receipt to show for it."

"For that matter, an American which refuses to buy Victory Liberty Bonds should ought to completely lost his memory, Abe," Morris declared. "Evidently a feller, if some one starts a conversation about the war, is going to say, '*What* war?' and when it is reminded to his memory that as recently ago as last November the papers was printing every day columns and columns about the war which was going on in Europe, he would probably say: 'Oh, *that* war!

I thought that war was already a thing of the past.' And also probably he might even ask, 'Tell me, was there many people hurt?'"

"Well, if some folks has got such short memories like all that, and is only affected by what they have read in the papers at the latest the day before yesterday, Mawruss," Abe said, "why not have the Victory Liberty Loan salesmen approach them on the basis of what is going on *now* in Europe? 'You are asked,' such a salesman would say, 'to invest your money in a first-class A-number-one security, backed by the United States government and bearing interest at the rate of four and three-quarters per cent. per annum, and that is the very least you could do for your country when you consider that right now,' the salesman would say, and he should practise in advance to make his voice sound tragical, 'right now *your* uncles and *my* uncles is making peace in Paris with all the strength of language which they've got in their system.

"'Yes, Mr. Sitson,' the salesman should go on to say, 'the government is only asking *you* to invest in interest-bearing cash money, so to speak, and what for a sacrifice is *that* compared to the suffering of *your* father-in-laws and *my* father-in-laws which is bravely standing larynx to larynx in the battle area of the Peace Conference while the air is filled with the French, Italian, Greek, Jugo-Slob, and Polish remarks? *You* sit here in your comfortable home while the flower of our experts and college professors is exposed to all

kinds of coffee and cigars. Ain't you ashamed to be doing nothing but buy bonds when old and feeble men like most of the American Peace delegates is battling with French waiters, French taxicab-drivers, French hotel service, and French laundry-lists, giving and receiving no mercy, y'understand, and you should thank Heaven that your own country has been spared the horrors of having on our own soil this here Peace Conference which is now raging in Paris, understand me.'"

"That would be anyhow an argument," Morris admitted, "but with these here Victory Liberty Bonds it shouldn't ought to be a case of first come first serve. With only four and a half billion dollars' worth of Victory Liberty Bonds for sale, Abe, seventy-five per cent. of the people of the United States should ought to be going around looking as sore as fellers that sell tickets in theater box-offices, and when any one asks 'em why, they should say: 'Ain't it just my luck! I put off buying my Victory Liberty Bonds till April 23d, and when I got round to the bank there wasn't one left.' Yes, Abe, instead of Victory Liberty Bond salesmen having to go about visiting customers, y'understand, they should ought to have luxurious fitted-up offices, and it should ought to be a case of when the customer arrives the Victory Liberty Bond salesman should ought to be playing auction pinochle or rummy with two other Victory Liberty Bond salesmen. Then when the customer says is this the place where

they sell Victory Liberty Bonds, the salesman says, 'I'll be with you in a minute,' and makes the customer stand around without even offering him a seat until the salesmen gets through playing two more hands. The customer should then make out his own application, y'understand, have the exact change ready, and close the door quietly when leaving, and that's the way I would sell Victory Liberty Bonds if I was the government."

"That's the way you even try to sell garments," Abe commented.

"Because," Morris continued, evading the challenge, "it is my idee that it is a privilege to be allowed to buy these here Victory Liberty Bonds, and before any one gets that privilege, Abe, he should be made to prove that he has done something to deserve it. Yes, Abe, instead of a man wearing a button to show that he has bought Liberty Bonds, he should ought to go before a notary public and make an oath that he has given up his quota to all Red Cross and United War Relief drives and otherwise done everything he could do to help win the war if he couldn't fight in it, y'understand, and then, and only then, Abe, he should be given a button entitling him to buy Victory Liberty Bonds under the conditions I have stated."

"But, joking apart, Mawruss, and talking business, not poetry, understand me," Abe asked, "do you actually think that this here Victory Liberty Loan would be all taken up by them

methods? To my mind, Mawruss, it would be a whole lot better to look the horse straight in the teeth, y'understand, and take it as settled that a lot of people which has got the money to buy bonds would go round saying that they would be very glad to buy bonds if they only had the money, y'understand. To such people, Mawruss, I would remind them again that a war, even when you win it, ain't a cash-in-advance proposition. In fact, a war ain't even a C. O. D. proposition. Wars is paid for on the instalment plan, Mawruss, and while this particular war is over, understand me, the bill has still got to be paid, and if such people won't lend the government the money to pay for the war, the government would have to do what the German government is going to do to the German people—instead of touching them for it and paying it back, they would frisk them for it and not even say much obliged, y'understand."

"At that, Abe, I ain't worried a whole lot about the result of this Victory Liberty Loan," Morris said. "When all is said and done, Abe, the American people love their country."

"I know they do," Abe agreed, "but also, Mawruss, there is a whole lot of fellers which loves their families and at the same time don't lose no sleep nights because they ain't providing for them as they should ought to do. So to them people I would say: 'Which would you rather have it as a souvenir of the war: Victory Liberty Bonds or tax bills?' Also, 'Would you

sooner be paid interest or would you sooner pay interest?'"

"In other words, Abe, you would threaten 'em into buying bonds," Morris observed.

"Only when it's necessary, Mawruss," Abe concluded, "and that wouldn't be in the case of one thousandth of one per cent. of the entire population, because the great majority of the people thinks the way I do about their money: the government let me make it, and the government lets me keep it, and if the government would sooner borrow part of it instead of taking it all, Mawruss, that's only the government's good nature, which nobody should presume too much on good nature, Mawruss. Am I right or wrong?"

XIII

WHEN IS A SECRET TREATY SECRET?

"I SEE where President Wilson sent a letter to the German government that they might just so well save the car fare and not send any delegates to this here Peace Conference which wouldn't be prepared for the worst, Mawruss," Abe Potash said one morning in April.

"You would think, considering how excited the German people gets nowadays, that they would have a hard time finding any one to take the job of delegate, Abe," Morris Perlmutter suggested, "which the least that happens to one of them German delegates after the German people finds out what was in the paper he signed is that his executioners would claim that the daylight-saving law made it unnecessary for them to wait till sunrise, y'understand."

"Well, he would always have the excuse that the only thing he seen of the Peace Treaty before he signed it was a dotted line, Mawruss," Abe said, "and also, Mawruss, it is just possible that the return half of them German peace delegates will read *via* Amsterdam, and that before taking a three years' lease of an Amsterdam apartment

some of them peace delegates would first visit a ticket-scalper and get that much off their minds, anyway."

"And even in Paris them German peace delegates wouldn't be, neither," Morris declared, "which I see that the French government is too safe arranging for the accommodation of them German delegates at a hotel next to the place where the Peace Treaty is going to be signed, Abe, and the lot on which the hotel stands is going to be protected with an egg-proof fence eight feet high so that the German delegates can escape any stray rotten eggs."

"The fence could be twelve feet high, Mawruss," Abe remarked, "and it wouldn't do any good, because nobody could escape rotten eggs in a French hotel, Mawruss, rotten coffee, neither. Also, Mawruss, eggs 'ain't got nothing to do with that fence, because if that fence wouldn't be there, Mawruss, when it comes time for them German delegates to sign the treaty, Mawruss, the Peace Conference would got to appoint a Committee of Resident Buyers to round up them German delegates, on account that nobody else but Resident Buyers who is accustomed to entertaining their American clients would know where them German delegates had disappeared to."

"Well, in a way it is the Peace Conference's own fault because they sent word to the German government that they didn't want to deal with no messengers, but that the German delegates should

all be high-up officials, Abe," Morris said, "which seemingly as a general thing the higher up a German happens to be, y'understand, the lower down he can act. Take, for example, the Crown Prince, Abe, and I always thought that no matter how much people abused him, Abe, he could anyhow go home and say to his wife whatever I done, I done it all for you, instead of going somewhere else and saying it to ballet-dancers, as his wife's mother claims."

"I understand he was leading a double life, Mawruss," Abe observed.

"He was leading a double life in spades, Abe," Morris declared, alluding to the game of auction pinochle. "Day after day his wife's mother says he would leave the house to go down-town to the palace, and instead he would go down-town not to the palace and never show up till all hours of the morning. Then when his wife asked him where he was putting in his time, y'understand, instead of acting reasonable and telling her a phony story about being sick and tired of getting stuck at the Reichskanzlei night after night, and that he wished the old man would get through springing a new chancellor on him every week, understand me, he gives himself dead away by getting sore. In fact, Abe, his mother-in-law says that the Hohenzollern royal colors is black and blue, anyhow so far as the Crown Princess is concerned, and that she made up her mind that she wouldn't let her daughter live with him no longer, so the chances is that if the German

people goes back to the monarchy, they would not only got to pay indemnities for what the Crown Prince done, but alimony besides."

"Well, even if the mother-in-law couldn't prove what she says about her daughter's husband, which very few mother-in-laws can, Mawruss," Abe said, "the Crown Princess would be able to get her devorce upon the grounds that her husband was convicted of a felony, y'understand, which he will be, Mawruss, just so soon as the Peace Conference has finished drawing up the indictment."

"Then them German people will be paying her temporary alimony permanently for the rest of her life, Abe," Morris said, "because them fellers which is drawing the indictments against the Kaiser and the Crown Prince seems to be taking their own time about it."

"It's a big job, Mawruss, because you take the indictment against the Crown Prince, Mawruss, and the chances is that the first two hundred counts alone is for French château furniture, and when some one steals anything from a French château, Mawruss, it's a hundred to one that he is guilty not only of larceny, y'understand, but of concealing mortgaged property besides, understand me," Abe said, "which it has always been a wonder to me, Mawruss, that some of these ladies of the four hundred who open tea-rooms for European war relief has never considered doing nothing for them Ruined Mortgagees of France, or the Suffering Judgment Creditors of

Allied Noblemen. Most of our best families has had experience some time or another with railroad reorganizations, and you would think they would have enough sympathy for them Starving Lienors of France, Mawruss, to get up, anyhow, a bazaar. It could be advertised with a picture by some big artist like C. G. Gibson, where an old man in what used to was a fur overcoat before the moths got into it is bending over Liber 2244 of Mortgages, page 391, which is all the old feller has got to show for what was once a first lien on some gilt-edged château property, Mawruss."

"Well, I'll tell you," Morris said, "there's a certain number of people which nobody has got any sympathy with, like mortgagers, coal dealers, head waiters, garage proprietors, and fellers which works in theayter ticket-offices, to which, of course, must also be added Postmaster-General Burleson."

"And why that feller is so unpopular is a mystery to me, Mawruss," Abe said. "You would think, to hear the way the newspapers talk about him, that the very least he had done was to mix arsenic with the gum which they put on the backs of stamps, whereas, so far as I could see, the poor feller is only trying to do his duty and keep down the wages of telephone operators, which I don't know how strong telephone operators is with the rest of the country, but compared with the hit that they make with me, Mawruss, Mr. Burleson would be a general favorite, y'understand."

"He was already in bad before them telephone girls struck on him, Abe," Morris said, "and for the very reason, as you say, that he has always done his duty as he seen it, which the trouble with them fellers that do their duty as they see it is that nobody else could see it, Abe. It is also the case that them people which do their duty as they see it usually has rotten eyesight, Abe, and when it comes right down to it, Abe, there is even some people which claims that Mr. Wilson should also consult an oculist to find out if he don't need to have his glasses changed. In fact, there's a couple of fellers by the name Orlando and Sonnino which seems to think that Mr. Wilson is practically blind so far as Fiume is concerned."

"You mean to say they 'ain't settled that Fiume thing yet, Mawruss?" Abe asked.

"They did and they didn't," Morris said. "Mr. Wilson give out a long statement about it in which he thought he settled it, Abe, and the Italian peace delegates said they would go home and leave the Peace Conference flat, y'understand, and thought they settled it, but the way it looks now, Abe, if the Peace Conference stays in session till they do settle it, when Mr. Wilson comes back and explains the Peace Treaty to Congress, he will speak with such a strong French accent that only the members from Louisiana will be able to understand a word he says."

"But why does Mr. Wilson say that Italy shouldn't have Fiume?" Abe inquired.

"Because it doesn't square up with his fourteen points," Morris replied, "and seemingly he don't want to stretch a point."

"Well, if he did, Mawruss, it wouldn't be the first time," Abe declared, "because if you recollect them fourteen points, which is more than most people could, Mawruss, point number one said that there should be open covenants of peace openly arrived at, Mawruss, and also something about such terms being discussed openly, frankly, and in the public view, Mawruss, and the way Mr. Wilson has stretched that point, Mawruss, it 'll never look like the same point again."

"Say!" Morris interrupted. "As a keep-it-dark proposition, Abe, Mr. Wilson 'ain't got nothing on this here Lloyd George, Clemenceau, and the firm of Orlando & Sonnino, to say nothing of the Japanese delegates, which I suppose you heard about them secret treaties, Abe."

"I never heard tell of them," Abe replied.

"Neither did Mr. Wilson until the other day, which the way it happened was this," Morris continued: "Orlando & Sonnino was talking the whole thing over in a friendly way with Lloyd George and Mr. Wilson, and Mr. Wilson says that when it come right down to it Italy's claims to Trieste wasn't what would be called in the language of diplomacy exactly kosher, neither, and Sonnino says: 'Is that so? Well, how about our treaty?' And although Orlando kicked his partner under the table and Lloyd George give him

one of them what-are-you-trying-to-do-spoil-everything looks, Mr. Wilson caught on right away. 'What treaty?' he asked, and Lloyd George says: 'Why, you know what treaty. I was sitting right here when Clemenceau told you all about it,' and it appears that all the time Mr. Wilson was kidding himself along that if he compromised by letting Italy have Trieste, she would pass up Fiume, Abe, it seems she had a secret agreement with France and England that she was to have Trieste, anyway."

"No wonder Mr. Wilson feels sore," Abe remarked.

"Wait, that ain't all," Morris said. "Now it appears that Japan has also a secret treaty with France and England to get a slice of China which formerly belonged to Germany, y'understand, and Mr. Wilson is beginning to experience what it is like when you sit in a poker game all evening and don't find out till the last round is on that everybody else around the table is playing for the house."

"They could all be playing honest at that, Mawruss," Abe suggested.

"Sure they could, with the exception of having a couple of secret treaties or so," Morris agreed, "but at the same time, Abe, I wouldn't be a bit surprised if since the discovery of these here secret treaties, Mr. Wilson has waked up more than once somewheres around three A.M. and asked himself did he or did he not need a mandatory, y'understand, and also wondered what the folks

back home is thinking—particularly a few Senators like Lodge and Johnson."

"I don't agree with you, Mawruss," Abe declared. "I think that Mr. Wilson will get the better end of the deal, because from what has happened in this war, Mawruss, diplomacy is one of them games where the feller which don't know how to play it has got a big advantage over the feller that does. So, therefore, while the old-time experienced diplomatist is saying it never has been done that way and therefore couldn't be done, Mawruss, a new beginner like Mr. Wilson has already gone to work and done it, which I bet yer right now, Mawruss, that if Mr. Wilson don't want Italy to have Fiume she won't get it, and the same thing goes for Japan also, Mawruss—secret treaty or no secret treaty."

"Still, there's a whole lot of people in America which would like to see Italy get Fiume, Abe," Morris said.

"There was a whole lot of people, Mawruss," Abe said, "but this secret-treaty business has killed it, which if Italy wanted to be fair about it, why didn't she come right out before the armistice even and say, 'Look-a-here, we got a secret treaty and we may as well tell you so right from the start'?"

"Then the secret treaty wouldn't been no more secret, Abe," Morris said.

"She would have been doing the manly thing, anyway," Abe said.

"I know she would," Morris admitted, "but

that's the difference between the old-fashioned Italian diplomacy and the new-fashioned American diplomacy. The Italians believe that there should be secret covenants of peace secretly arrived at, and we believe that there should be open covenants of peace openly arrived at."

"There is also the difference, Mawruss, that the Italians stick to their beliefs," Abe concluded, "and we don't."

XIV

THE FIRST DAY OF MAY

"I SEE where in Genoa they already changed the name of a street which only last week they called Wilson Avenue, Mawruss," Abe Potash said one morning after the rupture with Orlando.

"Well, that's the trouble with calling articles after the latest popular success, Abe," Morris said. "It don't make no difference if it's streets or cigars, the first thing you know the people gets a grouch on the original of the brand and the manufacturer has got to tear up a few thousand Flor de President Wilson labels and go back to calling it the Regalia de Ginsburg Brothers, or whatever the name was."

"But in Genoa they didn't go back to the name of the old street, Mawruss," Abe said. "They renamed it Fiume Street."

"And it wouldn't surprise me in the least if a few Burleson streets was changed to Second Class Avenue, Abe," Morris declared, "on account this is a time of great ups and downs in the reputations of politicians, not to say statesmen, Abe, which six months from now nobody would be able to say offhand whether the name was Bela

Hanson or Old Kun except the immediate family in Budapest or Seattle, as the case may be."

"In a way, Mawruss, the reputations of politicians, not to say statesmen, can get to be, so to speak, a nuisance to their fellow-countrymen," Abe observed, "which it happens once in a while that some politicians and statesmen gets to having such a high regard for their reputations, Mawruss, they would sooner injure their country than their reputation. Italian statesmen, French statesmen, English statesmen, and even, you might say, American statesmen goes about their work with one eye on the job in hand and the other eye on a possible statue or so at the junction of Main Street and Railroad Avenue in their native town, y'understand, with a subscription on the pedestal:

"'HARRIS J. SONNINO

Erected by His Fellow-Townsmen of East Rome, August 1, 1919.'"

"Such an ambition, anyhow, makes the statesmen try to do the right thing," Morris observed.

"And it also occasionally makes him do the obstinate thing, Mawruss," Abe continued. "In fact, Mawruss, sometimes I couldn't help wishing that it was the custom to have corporations and not men as ambassadors and presidents, because it would be such a simple matter when the Republicans nominated the Chicago Title Guarantee, Security and Mortgage Company for President

and the Democrats nominated the Algonquin Trust Company, of Pottstown, for the voters of the country to compare the statement of assets of each company and judge which was the most reliable, y'understand. Also, Mawruss, if the Algonquin Trust Company was now President of the United States, understand me, and somebody was to say they didn't like the way the President was running things at the Peace Conference, y'understand, nobody would have the nerve to arrest him for criticizing a great and good corporation like the Algonquin Trust Company. Furthermore, Mawruss, if Italy had been represented at this here Peace Conference not by Sonnino, but by the Milan Trust Company, which no doubt acts as executor, guardian or trustee like any other trust company, and therefore why not as ambassador, understand me, there never would have been no scrap about Fiume arising from the fact that the Milan Trust Company could never go home and face the people of Italy without Fiume, and also nobody would have considered that Mr. Wilson's statement was a direct slap in the face of the Milan Trust Company, Mawruss."

"Listen, Abe," Morris protested, "if you are trying to invent this *schmooes* about corporations just so you could knock Mr. Wilson, y'understand, such a scheme wouldn't deceive a child even."

"I wouldn't knock President Wilson for anything, Mawruss," Abe retorted. "I *couldn't* knock him, because when I think of Mr. Wilson I see

before my eyes a good-looking gentleman with a pleasant smile on his face, y'understand, and not very far away stands Mrs. Wilson, which, if Mr. Wilson didn't put over even one fourteenth of his fourteen points, Mawruss, his visit to Europe with Mrs. Wilson wouldn't be wasted, Mawruss, because it would have given them people over in the old country a chance to see what an American lady is and should ought to be, y'understand. But on the other hand, Mawruss, if the Democrats *had* elected the Algonquin Trust Company as President of the United States at the last election, y'understand, whenever I would think of the President of the United States I would see before my eyes a twenty-five-story fire-proof building with all the rents raised one hundred and fifty per cent. since last January, understand me, and I could go to work and knock with a clear conscience."

"But why should you want to knock the President of the United States?" Morris demanded.

"Ain't I telling you that I don't want to knock him?" Abe declared. "All I am saying is that, if such a thing was possible, it would be a whole lot better to have a corporation as President of the United States instead of an individual, Mawruss, because corporations don't get sick, corporations don't get insulted, a corporation *oser* cares whether it gets cheered or hooted, and finally, Mawruss, a corporation couldn't ride around Italy in an open carriage with the King of Italy and give the Italian people the impression that all

they had to do was to ask for Fiume and it was theirs."

"And another thing about a corporation, Abe, is that it ain't a copartnership where one partner could get every day a headache from listening to the other partner talking a lot of nonsense, Abe," Morris declared, "which you must got to remember that, beginning the first of May, if you would go to a soda-fountain and say, 'Give me something for a headache,' they would give you a United States Internal Revenue stamp for which you would got to pay two cents before they would even take the cork out of the bromo-asperin bottle."

"What's the difference whether they tax a headache coming or going, Mawruss?" Abe commented.

"A whole lot of difference," Morris said. "In the first place, the taxes which the country used to collect in one week from people when they were catching headaches would be more than equivalence to the taxes which the country is going to collect from people curing headaches during the next ten years. Also, Abe, nobody thought it was a hardship to pay taxes on a coming headache, whereas there will be a terrible howl go up over the tax on the same article in the opposite direction."

"At that, I think these here May 1st taxes is going to have a good effect on the American people, Mawruss," Abe said, "because there's nothing like taxes to make a man wake up and

take an interest in the way the government is being run."

"A man would got to be an awful sound sleeper in that respect if he wasn't roused up a little by the income tax which he has been paying for the past four or five years, Abe," Morris said.

"That's only once a year, Mawruss," Abe said, "but these here May 1st taxes is going to keep him awake three hundred and sixty-five days out of the year. People which thought you was a tightwad if you happened to mention that six hundred million dollars of the country's money was used up in experimenting with aeroplanes, is now going to shriek in agony every time they buy a three-dollar-and-a-quarter shirt that it's a shame and a disgrace the way every little secretary in the President's Cabinet is gallivanting half over Europe on the people's money, and they'd probably be just as hard if the shirt only cost two dollars and a quarter, excepting that the luxury tax of ten per cent. is only collected from the purchasers of men's shirts of the value of three dollars and upwards on amounts in excess of three dollars each. Also, Mawruss, people which has just paid eight dollars for a bathrobe on which the tax would be ten per cent. of fifty cents, or five cents cash, y'understand, is going to say: 'Couldn't that feller travel to and from Europe in one state-room the same like anybody else? Must he got to have a whole steamboat?' and they will start right in to estimate that the cost of keeping a steamboat the size of the *George Washington* in

commission is forty-five thousand six hundred and twenty-two dollars and thirty-eight cents per diem, and is it any wonder you've got to pay a one-cent tax on every orange phosphate, understand me."

"Some people is willing to get in a knock at Mr. Wilson without even so much as an orange-phosphate tax for an excuse, Abe," Morris said, significantly.

"I know they are," Abe replied, innocently, "and as for Postmaster-General Burleson, seemingly he couldn't suit nobody no matter what he does. Take, for instance, them fourteen bombs which was mailed in New York the other day, Mawruss, and if it wouldn't be that Postmaster-General Burleson has probably given strict orders that no mail should be forwarded which was short even a half-a-cent postage-stamp even, the chances is that every one of them fourteen bombs would have been delivered and exploded by now. But suppose that, instead of Postmaster-General Burleson, we would have had as Postmaster-General some good-natured feller which when his New York representatives called him up and told him they were holding fourteen packages there for additional postage, would have said: 'Oh, let 'em go. We couldn't afford to be small about a little thing like additional postage.' And what would have happened? Why, the fourteen judges, mayors, and assorted Senators and district attorneys to which them packages was addressed would have been lucky if they

escaped with nothing worse than singed eyebrows, Mawruss. And to-day yet, Mawruss, them fellers which has got only Postmaster-General Burleson to thank that they can still riffle a deck of cards, understand me, is probably going around beefing about the terrible delay in the delivery of mail under the administration of Postmaster-General Burleson."

"And do you think that the police will ever find out who sent them bombs, Abe?" Morris asked.

"Probably not," Abe replied, "but they will probably find some man or men who would have *liked* to have sent them and would have been *glad* to have sent them, and as nobody is going to miss such fellers, Mawruss, it probably won't make much difference in the long run if any such case of mistaken identity ain't discovered until the sentence is carried out, y'understand."

"I see that it says in the paper where the anarchists which sent them bombs was celebrating the first day of May, which is the anarchists' Fourth of July, Abe," Morris observed, "which, considering all the trouble that takes place in Europe with general strikes and riots on the first of May, Abe, it's a wonder to me that the constitution of the League of Nations didn't contain an article providing that in the interests of international peace, y'understand, the month of May should hereafter contain thirty days instead of thirty-one, commencing with the second day of May, and leave them anarchists up against it for a day to celebrate."

"The first of May is the socialists' Fourth of July, not the anarchists'," Abe said, "which, while it is possible that these here anarchists sent them bombs around the first of May out of compliment to their friends the socialists, Mawruss, an anarchist don't attach no particular sentiment to the day when a bomb explodes, just so long as it does enough damage, Mawruss."

"Just the same, I am in favor of doing away with the first of May," Morris insisted, "and if it ain't practical to abolish the date, Abe, let 'em anyhow cut out the celebration. Them general strikes causes a whole lot of trouble."

"They do if you take them seriously," Abe agreed, "because in this country, at least, Mawruss, only a few people takes part in the May first general strike. This year we only had two of our work-people away on account of the general strike, and one of them now claims he stayed home on account of injuring his hand in one of our buttonhole-machines, which I have got proof to show, Mawruss, that when the police threw him out of the hall where the meeting was taking place he landed on his wrist."

"He should have landed on his neck," Morris observed, "because if them socialists get hurt by their nonsense it's their own fault, Abe. They go to work and announce a general strike, and naturally the authorities takes them seriously and gets ready for trouble with a lot of policemen, which you know as well as I do, Abe, when the police gets ready for trouble they usually find it,

even if they have to make it themselves. The consequence is, Abe, that a fractured skull has become practically the occupational disease of being a socialist, just the same as phosphorus-poisoning attacked people which worked in match-factories in the old days before the Swedish manufacturers invented matches which strike only on the box one time out of fifty if the weather conditions is just right."

"Sure, I know," Abe observed, "but people worked in match-factories because they couldn't make a living in any other way, Mawruss, whereas nobody compels any one to be a socialist if he don't want to, Mawruss, and what enjoyment them socialists get out of it I don't know."

"It gives them, for one thing, the privilege of wearing a red necktie," Morris suggested.

"And that don't make them a first-class risk for accident insurance," Abe concluded, "around the first of May, anyhow."

XV

THE PEACE TREATY AS GOOD READING

"AT last the wind-up of this here Peace Conference seems to be in sight, Mawruss," Abe Potash said to his partner, Morris Perlmutter, the day after the Treaty of Peace was handed to the German plenipotentiaries. "As short a time ago since as last week it begun to look like our American delegates was going to stay in Paris for the rest of their lives, which, according to the tables of mortality prepared by some of our leading life-insurance companies, based on the average ages of all five of them delegates, would be anyhow until August 1, 1919."

"Well, they seem to have done a pretty good job, Abe," Morris observed. "I read over the accounts of the Treaty of Peace, Abe, and what them Germans has got to do outside of restoring the skull of the Sultan Okwawa under Section Eight of the treaty would keep her busy for fifty years yet."

"And who is this here Sultan Okwawa?" Abe inquired.

"I don't know," Morris replied, "but, considering the number of skulls which needs restoring on account of what the Germans done during the

past five years, Abe, and also considering the fact that this is the only skull mentioned by name in the Peace Treaty, he must of had some pretty influential friends at the Peace Conference. Also, I see that the Germans is also to give back the papers belonging to M. Reuher which they took in 1871, and, although Section Eight don't say nothing about it, I presume that if the papers are returned the finder can keep the money which was in the wallet at the time it was lost."

"Do you mean to tell me that this here Peace Treaty has got such small particulars like that in it?" Abe demanded.

"It don't seem to have overlooked anything, Abe," Morris went on, "which, when you consider that Mr. Wilson started in—in a small way—with only fourteen points, it's already wonderful how that man worked his way up. There must be several hundred thousand points in that Peace Treaty, including such points like the Sultan's skull and this here Reuher's papers, which Mr. Wilson never even dreamed of when he sat down that day in January, 1918, and thought out the original fourteen."

"He probably considered that if we ever licked Germany sufficient to make her accept as much as thirty-three and a third per cent. of them fourteen points that we would be doing well already," Abe remarked.

"And so did everybody else," Morris agreed. "And now they would got to accept a Treaty of Peace which loads up Germany with practically

every punishment that this here Peace Conference could think of except Prohibition."

"I must read that treaty sometime," Abe said. "It sounds like it would be quite amusing already."

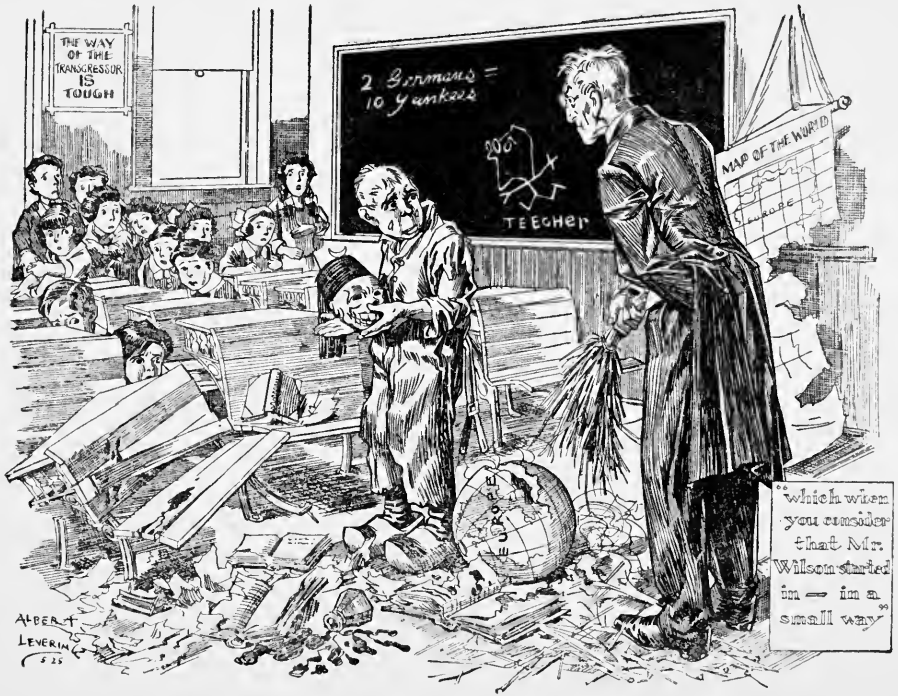
"Amusing ain't no name for it," Morris said. "The way the American people is going to enjoy reading that Treaty of Peace, Abe, would put Mr. Wilson not only in the class of favorite American Presidents along with George Washington and Abraham Lincoln, but also would give him an insured position as one of America's favorite authors along with Harry Bell Wright and Bradstreet. A good American could pass a very profitable month or so skimming it over, Abe, which it consists of fifteen sections, of which only the head-lines fills three full pages of the morning papers."

"Well, how long do you think it would take them German delegates to read it, Mawruss?" Abe inquired.

"They ain't going to read it," Morris said. "They're only going to sign it, and it ain't a bad idea, neither, because if they did read it, Abe, some of them Germans would drop dead along about the second section, which describes how much of Germany is left after France, Poland, Denmark, and Belgium gets through helping themselves."

"Might they would expire while they was reading the first section, maybe," Abe suggested.

"The first section 'ain't got nothing to do with


THE WAY OF THE TRANSGRESSOR IS TOUGH
2 Germans = 10 Yankees
TEECHER
MAP OF THE WURLD
"which when you consider that Mr. Wilson started in — in a small way"
ALBERT LEVERING
5 25

Germany," Morris explained. "The first section consists of the constitution of the League of Nations."

"Is that the same constitution of the League of Nations which them United States Senators raised such a round robin about?" Abe asked.

"It has been changed since then," Morris said. "The amendments consist of two commas contributed by ex-President Taft and a semicolon from Charles Evans Hughes. Elihu Root also suggested they insert the words *as aforesaid* in the first paragraph and also the words *anything hereinbefore contained to the contrary notwithstanding* in the last paragraph, but couldn't get by with it. However, Abe, the League of Nations is already such old stuff that people reading it in Section One of the Peace Treaty will in all probability skip it the way they did the first time it come out, and, anyhow, the real Treaty of Peace, so far as the plot and action is concerned, don't start till the second section."

"Could you remember any of the second section?" Abe asked.

"That's the section which tells about how much territory Germany gives up to Poland, France, Belgium, and Denmark, and after it goes into effect, Abe, it is going to considerably alter the words, if not the music, of '*Deutschland, Deutschland, ueber Alles*,'" Morris declared. "It also means, Abe, that the school-boys who used to was geography sharks and could bound Germany right off the reel, Abe, would now got to learn

them boundaries all over again and then take half an hour or so to tell what they've learned. You see, Abe, the Danzig area, for instance, consists of a V made a W by the addition of a similar V on the west, including the city of Danzig and—"

"Excuse me," Abe interrupted, "but this here sounds like a clothing alteration to me, which, if Germany's boundary was made smaller, why did they got to put a couple of V's into it?"

"The V's was put into Poland's boundary, not Germany's," Morris said.

"And I bet that Poland breathes a whole lot easier now that her boundary has got a couple of V's in it," Abe commented.

"Them two V's ain't all Poland gets," Morris continued. "She also gets the southeastern tip of Silesia beyond and including Oppeln, most of Posen and West Prussia, and a line is drawn from—"

"That's all right," Abe said. "I'll take your word for it, Mawruss, because, while that might be music to some people's ears, when it comes to geography I couldn't tell one note from another. So go ahead and tell me what is in the next section."

"The next section is also got in it a little complicated geography, Abe," Morris said. "It practically repeats what was said in the last section about how much territory Germany gives up, and then proceeds to rub it in. You know, of course, about the Sarre Basin."

"I *say* I do, but don't let that stop you," Abe replied. "Go ahead and describe it to me just like as if I didn't."

"Well, to make a long story short before I tell it, Abe," Morris said, "the Sarre Valley, which in Germany is like the Scranton and Wilkes-Barre section in Pennsylvania, is to be practically owned by France for fifteen years. At the end of that time, an election is going to be held and the people will vote as to whether they want to stay French or go back to Germany."

"And I suppose France will count the votes," Abe commented, "in which case she will probably appoint a board of elections consisting of whoever happens to be the Philadelphia director of public safety at that time, the leader of the Eighth Assembly District of New York City, and a couple of Chicago aldermen, Mawruss."

"The Treaty of Peace don't provide for it," Morris said, "but if any odds are quoted on the Curb, Abe, it wouldn't be on the result, but the size of the majority. There is also the same kind of an election to be held in Schleswig-Holstein, without much chance of a recount taking place, either, but so far as the rest of Sections Three, Four, and Five is concerned, Abe, Germany gives up all her interests in every part of the world without the privilege of even having all those in favor please saying Aye, y'understand."

"It would have made a big noise, anyhow," Abe declared. "Because the only people who

ain't in favor of Germany giving up her colonies is Germans, and not *all* Germans at that."

"However, what happens to Germany in the first five sections of this here Peace Treaty, Abe, is only, so to speak, the soup and entrée of the meal which the Allies makes of her," Morris said. "Section Six is where the real knife-and-fork work begins, Abe, which it starts right in with the German army and reduces it to the size of the Salvation Army, exclusive of the doughnut-cooking department."

"I'm surprised that you should compare the Salvation Army to a low-life army like the German army," Abe protested.

"I am only talking for the sake of argument, Abe," Morris assured him, "which if this here Section Six is carried out, Abe, the new German army wouldn't be armed with anything near as dangerous as doughnuts. In fact, Abe, the way this here Peace Treaty specifies what arms and ammunition the German army should be supplied with, the only thing that it would got to remind it that it is an army and not a *Sängerbund* would be the uniforms."

"And I am surprised that the Peace Treaty didn't forbid uniforms also, Mawruss," Abe said, "because if it wouldn't of been for his uniforms, Mawruss, the chances is that the German people would of caught on to that miserable four-flusher of a Kaiser already long since ago, Mawruss. Take these here spiked helmets, in particular the ones which is made of nickel plate, Mawruss, and

only to wear such a thing is liable to bring out all the meanness in them naturally mean German soldiers, Mawruss, so therefore I am in favor that the Peace Treaty be amended by providing that the uniform of the German army should be a three-button, black, single-breasted sack suit with no padding in the shoulders, Mawruss, and the helmet should be a brown derby hat of the pattern of 1898, and that the soldiers agree to wear this derby hat, of the same block and width of brim, for at least twenty years, Mawruss, because nothing takes the conceit out of a man so much as wearing a funny-looking hat, y'understand."

"This here Peace Treaty don't need no outside assistance when it comes to taking the conceit out of the German army, and the navy, neither, Abe," Morris continued. "In fact, Section Six does the same to the German navy as you would like to do to the German army, excepting that, instead of derby hats, it refers to battle-ships. In other words, Abe, it says that the German navy should have only six small battle-ships and that none of them could be replaced inside of twenty years. Just consider for a moment how it feels for a speed-bug which once used to consider that if he didn't buy himself every three months a new special-body twin six, y'understand, that he was living pretty close to the cushion, and condemn such a feller to go round for the next twenty years in a four-cylinder 1910-model Punkocar, Abe, and you will get some small idea of what Admiral von Tirpitz and all them

other bloodthirsty German admirals feels when they read that part of Section Six which refers to the new German navy."

"That wasn't the way they used to feel," Abe declared. "Up to a few days ago, Mawruss, von Tirpitz and Hindenburg and all them other German army and navy experts was treating this war like it would of been a pinochle game, and each of them was busy explaining by post-mortems how if his partner hadn't played the hand rotten they would have won by three points, not counting the last trick, but what are you going to do with a *Strohschneider* like that, and so forth."

"Did they mention anything about playing with marked cards?" Morris asked.

"They did not," Abe said, "nor did they say anything about having stacked the cards or dealing off of the bottom of the deck, Mawruss, but you would think from the way them fellers acted at Versailles, Mawruss, that this here Peace Conference is the breakup of a nice little friendly game, y'understand, and that *not* only should the winners take I. O. U's. from the losers, but that it is also up to the winners to serve a good delicatessen supper and pay for the lights and attendance."

"That must have been before they heard about the *capora* which is in store for them under Section Seven of this here Peace Treaty, Abe," Morris said, "which in order that there shouldn't be any softening of the sound to them German cauliflower ears, Abe, the words *one billion* ain't used

at all, but instead it speaks about a thousand million pounds, Abe, and, while it ain't any harder to raise than one billion pounds, it certainly gives you the impression that it is."

"And how many of these thousands of millions of pounds must the German people got to pay before they get through?" Abe asked.

"That the Peace Treaty don't say, Abe," Morris replied. "It leaves the fixing of the total amount for a commission to be appointed later, Abe, and the German people will be notified of their liabilities not later than May 1, 1921; but in the mean time, Abe, just to keep up their spirits they would got to pay a few instalments of one thousand million pounds each."

"But if the instalments is one thousand million pounds each, Mawruss, what do you think will be the grand total which Germany would have to pay?" Abe asked.

"About the same grand total as the Allies would have been obliged to pay if Germany had won," Morris replied.

"And how much would that have been?" Abe inquired.

"All they could raise, Abe," Morris concluded, "plus ten per cent."

XVI

THE GERMAN ROMAN HOLIDAY AND THE AMERICANIZATION OF AMERICANS

"I WAS speaking to my wife's sister's boy which he is just getting ready to gradgawate from High School, Mawruss, and I wish you could hear the way that feller talks, Mawruss," Abe Potash said to his partner, Morris Perlmutter.

"I shall probably got to have that pleasure, Abe," Morris Perlmutter replied, "because the first thing your wife's relations does when they gradgawate from school or go broke, as the case may be, is to get a job in this place and the second thing they do is to get fired."

"Listen, Mawruss," Abe said, "if I would of given jobs in this place to the number of relations by marriage which you already stuck me with, y'understand, I might just so well run a free business college and be done with it, which what I was going to say was that this here young feller was telling me that in the old days when the Romans won a war the way the Allies did, they used to make the losers walk in a parade so that the Roman people could see how them losers suffered."

"And what's that got to do with my giving jobs to my wife's relations?" Morris inquired.

"It 'ain't got nothing to do with it, but if you would let me open my mouth once in a while and not try to gag me every time I want to tell you something, Mawruss," Abe continued, "maybe I could learn you something."

"Maybe," Morris admitted, "but when you start in to tell about how smart one of your nephews by marriage is, Abe, it generally ends up by our paying a few weeks' salary to a young feller which all he learned about double entry is making birds with a pen, so I just want to warn you before you go any further, Abe, that in the future with me, Abe, if any of your nephews is an expert bird-maker with a pen, y'understand, you should please find him a job in a millinery concern and let me out."

"I wasn't going to say nothing about giving a job to nobody," Abe protested. "All I am trying to tell you is that if the Treaty of Peace, which you talked my head off about the other day, contained a section that the Germans should walk in a parade and show to the Allies how that Peace Treaty made them suffer, Mawruss, Lenine and Trotsky and all the other crickets who abuse Mr. Wilson like the New York Republican newspapers and the American ladies who are attending that Zurich Permanent Peace Convention, would of called the Allies all sorts of barbarians, y'understand. However, Mawruss, it only goes to show how unnecessary such a section in the Peace Treaty would be, Mawruss, because the Germans is now obliging with a wonderful Roman exhibition of

themselves. In fact, Mawruss, from the lowest to the highest, them German people seems to be saying to each other, 'Let's act like real Germans and make the worst of it!'"

"Did any one expect anything else from them Germans?" Morris asked.

"Well, from the way this here four-flusher von Brockdorff-Rantzau behaved the day they handed him the Peace Treaty, Mawruss," Abe said, "it looked like the Germans had made up their minds to be just so stiff-necked as they always was, Mawruss, and I begun to think that they were going to treat it as a case of *so mechullah, so mechullah*, y'understand, but the way them Germans is now crying like children, Mawruss, there ain't going to be enough sackcloth and ashes in Germany to go around, and them German professors will have to get busy and invent some *ersatz* sackcloth and ashes to supply the demand."

"Crooks are always poor sports, Abe," Morris declared, "in particular when they throw themselves on the mercy of the people that they didn't intend to show no mercy to themselves. Take this here Ebert, for instance, and he don't make no bones about saying that the German people relied on President Wilson and the United States of America being easy marks, but *ai Tzuris*, what a mistake that was! In effect he says that President Wilson on January 22, 1917, made the statement that the victor must not force his conditions on the vanquished, and relying on

that statement, Germany went to work and got into a war with the United States because if Germany got licked, y'understand, the worst that can happen her is that she makes peace again on her own terms, and then when Germany did get licked, see what happens to her. President Wilson behaves like a frozen snake in the grass which somebody tries to warm by putting the snake into his pants pocket, y'understand, and when the snake gets thawed out, understand me, it bites the hand that feeds it, and what are you going to do in a case like this?"

"At that, Mawruss, Ebert ain't making near so bad an exhibition of himself as this here Prince von Hohenlohe. There was a feller which was used to was the German Chancellor, Mawruss," Abe said, "and the dirty deals which he helped to put over on the Rumanians and the Russians, by way of Treaties of Peace, y'understand, was such that if we would of attempted it with the Germans, Mawruss, and the United States Congress would of confirmed it, Mawruss, Victor Berger would be fighting to be let out of the House of Representatives and to be admitted to Leavenworth, instead of *vice versa*, on the grounds that he didn't want to associate with no crooks, y'understand, but seemingly this here Hohenlohe is suffering from loss of memory as well as loss of self-respect, Mawruss, because he is now making speeches in which he is weeping all over his already tear-stained copy of the Peace Treaty and calling it the Tragedy of Versailles,

whereas compared to the Treaty of Peace which you might call the Tragedy of Brest-Litovsk, Mawruss, this here Versailles Treaty of Peace is a Follies of 1919 with just one laugh after another, y'understand."

"And I see also where this here Scheidemann is also figuring very largely in this here Roman exhibition the Germans is making of themselves, Abe," Morris observed. "He said the other day that the Germans would never, never, never—or anyhow not until next Thursday a week—sign the Peace Treaty. He put his hand on where a German's heart would be if he had one, Abe, and said that no Germans would positively and absolutely not submit to any such Treaty of Peace as the one offered to them, or that is to say they would not submit to it except on and after May 22, 1919, and anyhow, nobody would ever trust President Wilson again."

"And yet, Mawruss, when them Germans gets over the first shock of this here Peace Treaty and wipe away their tears sufficient to see things a little more clearly, y'understand," Abe commented, "it is just barely possible that they are going to do some rapid figuring on what they gain by not supporting a few thousand princes, not to mention the money which that bloodthirsty Kaiser and his family used to draw in salaries and commissions, Mawruss, and when these amounts are offset against indemnities which the Germans are required to pay under the Peace Treaty, Mawruss, it will in all probability be found that

the German nation is beggared, as this here Scheidemann would say, to the extent of $0.831416 per capita per annum by such indemnities. The result is going to be that some of them Germans will then begin to figure how maybe it was worth that much money per capita per annum to get rid of that *rosher* and they will also begin to realize that it has been worth even more than that much per capita per annum to the Allied people to see a performance such as the German people continuing to weep in sympathy with Ebert and Scheidemann, y'understand, they will be advising them two boys to go and take for ten cents apiece some mathematic spirits of ammonia and quit their sobbing."

"However, Abe," Morris remarked, "there was a few Americans which instead of being in the audience enjoying the performance was back on the stage with the Germans and weeping just so hard as any of them. Take these here American lady delegates to the small-time Peace Conference which is running at Zurich, Switzerland, in opposition to the old original Peace Conference in Paris, Abe, and them ladies with their voices choked by tears, Abe, passed a resolution that be it resolved that the Peace Treaty is already secret diplomacy, that it is the old case of the side winning the war getting the spoils, and a lot of other resolutions to which the only resolution anybody could pass in answer to such resolutions would be, 'Well, what of it?'"

"That only proves to me, Mawruss, how nec-

essary it is, this here Americanization work which you read so much about in the papers," Abe declared. "Here is four American ladies which is lived in the country for some years—in fact, ever since they was born, and that ain't such a short time neither, when you see their pictures, Mawruss, and yet them ladies talks like they never heard tell of the Star-spangled Banner. Seemingly the fact that we licked Germany don't appeal to them at all, and so far as these resolutions which they passed between sobs, Mawruss, gives any indications, Mawruss, they would like to have seen this here European War end in a draw, with perhaps Germany getting just a shade the better of it."

"And what has all this got to do with Americanization work, Abe?" Morris inquired. "I always thought that Americanization was taking the greenhorns which comes to this country from Europe, and teaching them how to think and act like Americans."

"That comes afterward, Mawruss," Abe said, "because it seems that ever since this here European War, Mawruss, Americanization needs to begin at home, Mawruss, and that the first ones to be Americanized should ought to be Americans. There is, for instance, Mr. O. G. Villard, who was born and raised in this country, Mawruss, which he comes out with a statement the other day that them loafers of the Munich soviet who killed all them professors and ladies a couple of weeks ago, compared very favorably with the

legislatures of the states of New York and Pennsylvania, Mawruss. Now when you consider that them two legislatures is part of our government, Mawruss, the way it looks to me is that if a foreigner had said such a thing he would have been Americanized without the option of a fine by the nearest city magistrate."

"At the same time, Abe," Morris said, "when you read in the papers about the New York State Senator Thompson and the goings-on up in Albany, Abe, it looks like Americanization should ought to be done at the source, y'understand, and then it wouldn't be necessary to Americanize Mr. Villard at all."

"Sure, I know, Mawruss," Abe agreed, "but what I am driving into is that Americanization for Americans must appeal very strongly to colored Americans, especially the Americanization of those Americans who believe that the colored man should ought to be put in his place and don't hesitate about designating the place as the end of a rope without the trouble and expense of a jury trial, y'understand."

"I would even get a little more personal as that, Abe," Morris declared. "I would even say that there should ought to be classes in Americanization for those Americans who believe that the religion and race origin of certain other Americans makes them eligible to give their children's lives to the country and their money to Red Cross and other War Drives—but that it don't make them eligible to stay at first-class sum-

mer hotels or play golluf by first-class country clubs."

"Say," Abe broke in, "there is need of more important Americanization among Americans than that, Mawruss. There should ought to be Americanization of Americans who think it is American for landlords to ask for raises of their rent and un-American for workmen to ask for raises of their wages. In fact, this whole Americanization movement should ought to be centered on Americanizing out of Americans any habits, customs, or schemes they try to put across which is apt to make Polish-Americans, Italian-Americans, Jewish-Americans or Assorted Foreign-Americans say to one another, 'Well, if that's the way Americans behave, give me back my hyphen and let me go home.'"

"Well, after all, Abe, it's a mighty small bunch of Americans which ain't Americanized yet," Morris observed.

"I know it," Abe said, "and it's their smallness which makes me sore, Mawruss, because no matter how small they are by number, or nature, Mawruss, they are the ones that the Turks pulled on us when we protested about them poor Armenians *nebich*. Also, Mawruss, if Mr. Wilson should protest that the new Polish Republic ain't treating our people as equals, y'understand, the new Polish Republic could come right back with: 'Neither is any number of summer hotels we could name in the Adirondacks Mountains of your own United States.' Also, if the Peace

Delegates from this country gives a hint to the Greeks that there is colonies of Bulgarians living in Greece for years already which wants to be Greeks and should ought to have the same voting rights as Greeks, y'understand, all Venezuela or whatever the Greek secretary of state has got to say is, 'Well, we hold that these people 'ain't got a right to vote under a law called the Grandfather Law, which we copied from similar laws passed in the states of Georgia, Alabama, and Mississippi—in your own United States,' and them poor old Peace Delegates of ours wouldn't have a word to say."

"At that, Abe, I think all them disagreeable things in this country is going to be changed by the war," Morris suggested.

"Perhaps, Mawruss," Abe concluded, "but considering what changes have taken place because of this war, it's wonderful how little changed things really are."

XVII

MR. WILSON'S FAVOR OF THE 20TH ULTO. AND CONTENTS NOTED

"YES, Mawruss," Abe Potash said to his partner, Morris Perlmutter, one morning recently, "a feller which has got to write to the newspaper to say that he didn't say what the newspaper said he said when it reported his speech, y'understand, has usually made a pretty rotten speech in the first place, and in the second place when he tries to explain what it really was that he did say, Mawruss, it practically always sounds worse than what the newspaper said he said."

"But what did he say and who said it, Abe?" Morris inquired.

"Ambassador Morgenstimmung or Morgenstern, I couldn't remember which, Mawruss," Abe replied, "and although he 'ain't wrote to the newspapers yet to deny that he said it, Mawruss, it is only a question of time when he would do so, because he either said one thing or the other, but he couldn't say both."

"Listen, Abe, if you think that unless you break it to me gradually what this here Morgenstern said, it would be too much of a shock to me,"

Morris announced, "let me tell you that it is a matter of indifference to me *what* he said."

"So it is to 'most everybody else except the immediate family, Mawruss," Abe continued, "but not to keep you in suspense, Mawruss, what this Ambassador Morgenstern said was in a speech to the American soldiers in Coblenz where he told them that there was going to be another big war in which America would got to fight during the next fifteen or twenty years, and also that he had every confidence in the League of Nations."

"Well, there's a whole lot of United States Senators which has got the same kind of confidence in the League of Nations, Abe," Morris declared. "In fact, some of them is confident that the League of Nations will bring about a war for us in even less than fifteen years."

"Well, I'll tell you," Abe said, "the word *confidence* has got a whole lot of different meanings, Mawruss, and it's quite possible that this here Ambassador Morgenstern used the word with reference to the League of Nations in its Chatham Square or green-goods meaning, because otherwise how could the League of Nations cause another war in less than fifteen years, unless, of course, the feller which prophesied it was a Republican Senator, which Mr. Morgenstern is not."

"To tell you the truth, Abe," Morris said, "I have heard and read so many different things about this here League of Nations that it wouldn't surprise me in the least if the final edition of it

provided that any nation which didn't go to war at least once every three years with some other nation or nations, y'understand, should be expelled from the League of Nations with costs, y'understand, and in fact, Abe, it is my opinion that when some one makes a speech about this here League of Nations nowadays, he might just so well write a letter to himself denying that he said what the newspaper said he said, and let it go at that, because it's a hundred to one that he was the only person who didn't skip it when it was printed in its original garbled condition."

"At that, Mawruss, you are going to be really and truly surprised to find out what that League of Nations covenant means when it comes up to be argued about by the United States Senate," Abe observed, "because a great many of them Senators is high-grade, crackerjack, A-number-one lawyers on the side, Mawruss, and formerly used to make their livings by showing that the contract which the plaintiff made with the defendant meant just the opposite to what the plaintiff or defendant meant it to mean—or *vice versa*, according to which end of the lawsuit such a Senator was arguing on, Mawruss, so you can imagine what is going to happen to that League of Nations covenant. Take a level-headed lawyer like Senator Hiram S. Johnson of California, Mawruss, which he 'ain't got the least disposition to believe that the League of Nations covenant means what President Wilson says it means, understand me, and when he gets through showing what he thinks

it means, and Senator Borah gets through showing what *he* thinks it means, and Senator Reed gets through thinking what HE thinks it means, understand me, that League of Nations covenant will have as many different meanings as the contested last will and testament of a childless millionaire who has married a telephone operator on his death-bed to spite his grandnieces and nephews, Mawruss."

"Congress will have a lot of other matters to settle before that League of Nations comes up, Abe," Morris said, "which I was reading the other day the message which President Wilson wrote from Paris, and he certainly laid out a lot of work for them to do till he gets back."

"You mean that letter of May 20th where he says: 'Dear Gents: Sorry not to be with you and I have been out of touch with things over in America so long that you will know a whole lot better than I do what is needed in the way of laws,' Mawruss, and then goes to work and tells them what is needed to the extent of half a newspaperful?" Abe asked.

"I couldn't remember the exact words," Morris replied.

"Well, I've been expecting every day to see in the newspapers that he got an answer from the round robins reading: 'Dear Sir: Yours of the 20th inst. to hand and contents noted and in reply would say we wouldn't positively do nothing of the kind, and in case you are not back with samples on or before ten days from date, we will

take such steps as we may think proper to protect our interests in the matter and oblige,'" Abe said, "because if you will remember, Mawruss, them round robins wanted Mr. Wilson to let the Senate go on making laws while he was away, and the President says, 'You couldn't make no laws till I get back,' and then when them round robins asked him when he would be back, he said, 'I'll be back when I am back,' and now he ain't back, and he has got to ask them round robins to go to work with the other Senators and Congressmen and make the laws which they wanted to make in the first place, Mawruss."

"Then it is going to be some time before he gets back if any such a deadlock like that happened, Abe," Morris said, "because I see where it says in the papers that Mr. Wilson won't come back until he has signed the treaties of peace with Germany and Austria, and France and England won't agree to finish up the treaties for Mr. Wilson's signature until they know that the United States Senate will ratify them and the United States Senate won't ratify them until they are finished up and submitted to them signed by Mr. Wilson, and then I didn't read no more about it, Abe, because I begun to get dizzy."

"I very often get that way myself nowadays when I am reading in the newspapers, Mawruss," Abe said, "in particular when they print them full texts, like the full text of the League of Nations Covenant or the full text of the President's message. Former times when the papers had in

'em straight murders and bank robberies from the inside or out, Mawruss, and you sat opposite somebody in the Subway who had to move his lips while he was reading, you took it for granted that he was an ignoramus which had to hear them simple words pronounced, even if it was by his own lips, before he could understand them, Mawruss, but you take this here letter of the 20th inst., Mawruss, and when you read where President Wilson says with reference to telephone and telegraph rates, Mawruss, 'there are many confusions and inconsistencies of rates. The scientific means by which communication by such instrumentalities could rendered more thorough and satisfactory has not been made full use of,' understand me, you could move your lips, your scalp, Heaven and Earth, Mawruss, and still you couldn't tell what Mr. Wilson was driving into."

"Well, I glanced over that Message myself, Abe," Morris said, "and the capital I's was sticking up all through it like toothpicks on the cashier's desk of an armchair lunch-room, Abe. In just a few lines, Abe, Mr. Wilson says, 'I hesitate, I feel, I am conscious, I trust, I may, I shall, I dare say, I hope and I shall,' and when he started to say something about Woman Suffrage, he undoubtedly begun with 'May I not,' but evidently when he showed the first draft to Colonel House or somebody, they said, 'Why do you always say, *May I not*'? and after discussing such substitutes as '*Doch allow me*,' 'If you

'ain't got no objections,' and 'You would excuse me if I would take the liberty,' Abe, they decided to use, 'Will you not permit me,' so, therefore, that part of the President's message which talks about Woman Suffrage says, 'Will you not permit me to speak once more and very earnestly of the proposed amendment to the Constitution and so forth,' and that, to my mind, is what give President Wilson the idea that it might be a good thing to let the manufacture and sale of wine and beer continue after June 30th, which he probably argued, 'If I have such a tough time shaking off the *May-I-not* habit, how about them poor fellers which has got the liquor habit?'"

"Maybe he figured that way and maybe he didn't, Mawruss," Abe said, "but if any one feels that he ought to stock up with a few bottles of wine for *kiddush* or *habdolah* purposes on or after June 30, 1919, Mawruss, he oughtn't to be misled by anything President Wilson said in his letter of the 20th ulto., Mawruss, because when it comes to extending the life of the beer and wine industry after June 30th, Mawruss, them Senators and Representatives is more likely to take suggestions from the President of the Anti-Saloon League than from the President of the United States."

"And I don't know but what they are right at that, Abe," Morris said, "because this here Prohibition is strictly a matter of what the majority thinks, Abe."

"But from the howl that has been going up, Mawruss," Abe protested, "it looks to me like

the majority of people wants the sale of schnapps to continue."

"I didn't say it was a question of what they want, Abe," Morris declared, "I said it was a question of what the majority thinks, and the majority of people thinks that while they can drink schnapps and they can let it alone, Abe, the majority of people also think that the majority of the people who drink schnapps would be a whole lot better off without it. So that's the way it stands, Abe. Nobody wants to leave off buying liquor, but nobody wants to take the responsibility of letting the sale of liquor continue."

"Also, Mawruss, I've been reading a good many articles in the magazines about this here Prohibition lately," Abe declared, "and in every case the writer shows how disinterested he is, y'understand, by stating right at the start that so far as he is concerned, they could leave off selling liquor to-morrow and he would be perfectly satisfied."

"And he is going to have to be, Abe," Morris said, "because that way of looking at the liquor question is what has brought about Prohibition. Practically everybody who drinks schnapps and enjoys it, Abe, is afraid that everybody else who drinks schnapps and enjoys it is going to think that he drinks schnapps and *enjoys* it, so he goes to work and pulls this phony unselfish stuff about, 'So-far-as-I-am-concerned, it don't make no difference how soon the country goes Prohibition,' and the result is that the country is going Prohibition, and nobody even now has got nerve

enough to admit that it's going to cut him out of a great many good times in the future."

"Well, there's one thing about it, Mawruss," Abe declared, "it's going to make near-by foreign countries, no matter what the climate may be, great summer and winter resorts for these fellers who don't care how soon Prohibition goes into effect and who will continue not to care until 1 A.M. on July 1, 1919. Yes, Mawruss, this here Prohibition is going to give a wonderful boost to the business of building bridges across the Rio Grande River and to running lines of steamers between the United States and them foreign countries near by where the inhabitants have got it figured out that if you drink and enjoy it, you might just as well admit it before it's too late to keep the government from not taking a joke, if you know what I mean."

"Sure I know what you mean," Morris said, "and it has always seemed to me, Abe, that even the Scotch whisky business ain't going to be affected so adversely by this here Prohibition, neither, except that the merchandise is going to reach its ultimate hobnail liver *via* Mexico and Cuba instead of New York and Chicago, and furthermore, Abe, there will be a great demand for sleepers on them northbound trains from Mexico, and the berths will only have to be made up once on leaving the Mexican frontier. However, the diners won't do much of a business on them trains, but they will certainly have to carry extra-large ice-water tanks."

"And while I don't wish them drink-and-leave-it-alone fellers no particular harm, Mawruss," Abe declared, vehemently, "some time when they are traveling on one of them oasis-bound limiteds, Mawruss, it would serve them right if it run off the rails or something and shook 'em up just enough to make them realize the inconvenience their own foolishness has brought on them."

"Say!" Morris exclaimed. "I didn't know you was taking this Prohibition affair so much to heart, Abe."

"What do you mean—take it so much to heart?" Abe protested. "I take a glass of schnapps once in a while, Mawruss, but so far as I am concerned this here Prohibition can come into effect this afternoon yet, and it wouldn't affect me none."

"I am the same way, Abe. I can drink and I can leave it alone," Morris said. "Or, anyhow, I *think* I can."

XVIII

BEING UP IN THE AIR, AS APPLIED TO TRANSATLANTIC FLIGHTS, CROWN JEWELS, AND LEAGUE OF NATIONS SPEECHES

"THE way I feel about it is this, Mawruss," Abe Potash said to his partner, Morris Perlmutter: "It don't make no difference if them two boys failed in their intentions, y'understand, they succeeded in making millions and millions of people in Paris, Winnipeg, New York, and who knows where not, stop hating each other for anyhow a few hours, and instead they smiled and shook hands and allowed themselves a recess in their regular work of winning strikes, losing strikes, shooting, starving, and cheating each other and their countries, while they all joined in being glad that Mrs. Hawker and the baby had got the popper back home with them and that Grieve was safe with his family or anyhow as safe as a young feller can be who is liable to quit his home at any moment and do the same wonderful, foolish thing all over again."

"It's too bad that all them strikers and Bolsheviks which is acting as senselessly as children, couldn't also act as sensibly as children, Abe," Morris Perlmutter observed, "and stop crying

long enough to forget what they were crying about, y'understand, but they won't. They are bound and determined to eat the goose which lays the golden eggs, Abe, and the end is going to be that they will find out it ain't a goose at all, but that instead of killing a goose that's fit for food they have only smashed an incubator that's fit for nothing but laying more eggs, and that's the way it goes."

"Well, it's certainly wonderful how popular them two young fellers become in the course of a few days, Mawruss," Abe declared. "Which makes you think, Mawruss, if such a thing happens to two unknown young men like Hawker and Grieve, there is big possibilities in this cross-the-ocean flight for fellers which was once highly thought of and which nowadays nobody gives a nickel about. Take, for instance, them two William J. fellers, Bryan and McAdoo, which only a short time since people was reading about it in the papers, Mawruss, and what them fellers should ought to do is to hire a good, undependable airyoplane, y'understand, and take the first boat for Trespassing, or whatever the place is. Then all they have to do is to make a good start, and get afterwards rescued by a tramp steamer, and right away they become general favorites again. Or the kaiser and the crown prince might try it, Mawruss. There must be plenty of airyoplanes laying around Germany nowadays which could be picked up for a song, and when word come that it had fallen into the Atlantic Ocean with them two

birds aboard somewhere around one thousand five hundred miles from sixty degrees forty-three minutes, y'understand, it might make the Hohenzollerns so popular that there would be a counter-revolution or something."

"But suppose they would overdo the thing and not get rescued," Morris suggested.

"Well, that would make them popular with *me*, anyhow," Abe said, "and there is probably millions of people like me in that respects, Mawruss. Still, joking to one side, Mawruss, there is some things which you couldn't joke about like what this young feller Read did, which is working for the United States navy, Mawruss. There was a young feller what took his life in his hands, Mawruss, and yet from the maps which the newspapers printed, you would think it was already a dead open-and-shut proposition that if the airyoplane was to break down anywheres between Trespassing and Europe, Mawruss, there would be waiting United States navy ships like taxicabs around the Hotel Knickerbocker, waiting to pick up this here Read before he even so much as got his feet wet, understand me. Yes, Mawruss, right across the whole page of the newspaper was strung the *Winthrop*, the *Farragut*, the *Cushing*, and other fellers' names up to the number of fourteen destroyers, and the way it looked on that map, there was a solid line of boats waiting to receive any falling airyoplane all the way from one side of the ocean to the other, whereas you know as well as I do, Mawruss, you can as much

make both ends meet on the Atlantic Ocean with fourteen ships as a shipping-clerk with ten children can in New York City on a salary of eighteen dollars a week."

"I understand them ships was only fifty miles apart," Morris observed.

"Sure, I know," Abe agreed, "but if that airyoplane was to drop anywheres between the second and the forty-ninth mile, Mawruss, them ships might just as well have been stationed on the North River between Seventy-second and One Hundred and Thirtieth streets, Mawruss, for all the good it would have done this young feller Read. Also, Mawruss, if they would have had so many destroyers on the Atlantic Ocean that they would have run out of regular navy names for them and had to resort to the business directory so as to include the Acker, the Merrall, the Condit, the Rogers, the Peet, the Browning, the King, the Marshall, and the Field, in that collection of ships, Mawruss, that wouldn't of made this here Read's life a first-class insurable risk, neither."

"And being picked up by a destroyer ain't such a wonderful *Capora*, neither, y'understand," Morris said, "which they tell me that on one of them destroyers an admiral even couldn't last out as far as the Battery even without anyhow getting pale. Also, Abe, I couldn't see that it proved anything when this here Read had the good luck to arrive at Lisbon, except that he was a brave young feller and seemingly didn't care how much his family worried about him."

"That's what people have always said when anything new in the way of transportation was tried, Mawruss, but them people was never the ones that deposited the checks when the scheme begun to pay dividends some two or three years later," Abe retorted. "The world never made no advances with the assistance of the even-so and what-of-it fellers, which, when the king and queen of Spain raised a little money on the crown jewels, Mawruss, so that Christopher Columbus *olav hasholom* could make the first trip across the Atlantic Ocean by water, Mawruss, the people which saw in it the first steps towards the *Aquitania* and *Levinathan* wasn't so plentiful, neither."

"Probably the feller which lent the money on the jewels wasn't so enthusiastic about it, at any rate," Morris declared, "because as first-class, A-number-one security for a loan, Abe, crown jewels 'ain't got very much of an edge on them sympathetic pearls which carries such a tremendous overhead for electric light in the store windows where they are displayed. Take, for instance, the Austrian crown jewels, Abe, and I see in the paper where for years and years everybody took the Austrian emperor's word for it that they contained more first-water diamonds than could be found in stocks of all the Fifth Avenue jewelers and Follies of from 1910 to 1919 chorus ladies combined, and the other day when the provisional government tried to sell them Austrian crown jewels to buy food for the starving Austrians, y'understand, for what was thought to be rubies,

diamonds, and pearls weighing from twenty to a hundred carats apiece, Abe, they couldn't get an offer of as much as a bowl of crackers and milk."

"What do you suppose happened to the originals, Mawruss?" Abe asked.

"What *should* of happened to them?" Morris asked, rhetorically. "I bet yer that not once, but hundreds of times, an Austrian emperor has taken one of the ladies of the Vienna Opera House ballet to the vaults of the Vienna Deposit and Storage Company and just to show her how much he thought of her, when she said, '*My, ain't that a gorgeous stone!*' he has said, '*Do you really like it?*' and pried it right out of its setting right then and there."

"And I also bet yer that when the ballet lady got a valuation on it the next day," Abe said, "the pawnbroker said to her, '*Ain't this a diamond which the Emperor pried out of his crown for you?*' and when she said, '*Yes,*' he says that the fixed loaning value of an imperial pried-out diamond was one dollar and eighty-five cents, and from that time on the ballet lady would be very much off all emperors."

"It seems to me that in all the other countries of the world where kings and emperors still hold on to their jobs, Abe, it wouldn't be a bad thing for the government to check up the crown jewels on them, in case of emergencies like revolutions or having to pay war indemnities," Morris remarked, "which I wouldn't be surprised if right now the German people is figuring on raising

several million marks on the German crown jewels towards paying the first billion-dollar instalment of the war indemnity, and when the government appraiser gets ahold of them, he will turn in a report that they are not even using that kind of stuff in decorating soda-fountains even."

"In that case the German government will probably try to arrange a swop," Abe said, "trusting to luck that the Allied governments having agreed to take them crown jewels at the value placed on them by the kaiser, will not discover their real value until they've changed hands, Mawruss, in which event the German government will claim that the substitution took place after the Allies received them and did the Allies think they could get away with anything as raw as that."

"Even the Germans 'ain't got such a nerve," Morris commented.

"'Ain't they?" Abe retorted. "Well, how about the counter-claim they are now making for an indemnity of $3,048,300,000, *aus gerechnent?* Them Germans has got the nerve to claim anything that they think they've got the slightest chance of getting away with, Mawruss, so they stick in this indemnity which they say they ought to receive from the Allies because the blockade which the Allies kept up against Germany during the war caused such a shortage in food that one million less German children was born during that time."

"Three thousand and forty-eight dollars and

thirty cents is a pretty high valuation to put on a German, and a new-born German at that," Morris commented. "You're sure that the three thousand and forty-eight dollars ain't a mistake? Because thirty cents sounds like the correct figures to me, Abe."

"The birth reduction ain't the only item in their bill, Mawruss," Abe continued. "They also claim that the blockade prevented the importing of rubber, camphor, and quinine."

"And I suppose they claim that tire trouble, moths, and malaria increased something terrible," Morris said. "Well, they're going to have just as hard a time proving that claim as Senator Reed would that Brazil is a nation of colored people, Abe."

"When did Senator Reed say that, Mawruss?" Abe asked.

"When he was arguing against the League of Nations, in the Senate the other day," Morris replied. "He said that there were fifteen white nations in the League and seventeen colored nations, and he reckoned Brazil in as one of the colored nations, probably because he confused the Brazil population with the Brazil nuts which are sometimes called nigger-toes, Abe. However, Abe, he also included Cuba as a colored nation, because he claimed that fifty per cent. of the population is colored."

"But the President of Cuba and the gentlemen which is running the Cuban government ain't colored people, Mawruss," Abe said.

"That don't make no difference to Senator Reed, Abe," Morris declared. "To Senator Reed, anything that's found alive in a stable is a horse, Abe; in fact, coming from Missouri, as Senator Reed does, considering the size of the colored population of that state, Senator Reed probably considers himself a colored man, because Senator Reed is perfectly honest in his opinions, Abe. When he argues that Cuba is a colored nation, he believes it, so, therefore, when he argues himself into being a colored man, he probably believes that he ain't quite so dark a colored man as Senator Vardaman, who comes from Mississippi, Abe, but only a light colored man, which is of course all nonsense, like Senator Reed's arguments. Senator Vardaman is a white man and Senator Reed is a white man and they are both of them as white as, but no whiter than, the President of Cuba and several million Brazilian gentlemen. But with Senator Reed it's a case of any argument is a good argument, so long as it is an argument against the League of Nations."

"But as I understand it Senator Vardaman ain't in the Senate no more," Abe said. "He got defeated last election."

"And the way he is heading, Abe," Morris said, "Senator Reed will join him next election, because, while nine times out of ten, when it comes to re-election, a United States Senator has got things pretty well sewed-up, *so* sewed-up he couldn't have them, that he could make such foolish speeches on such an important matter. Furthermore, it

don't make no difference how wise or how foolish the speeches which Senators makes against the League of Nations might be, Abe, it is going to go through, *anyhow.*"

"What makes you think that?" Abe asked.

"Because I see where the National Democratic Committee met in Chicago the other day, and the chairman by the name Cummings threatened that if the Senate don't approve the League of Nations Covenant, Mr. Wilson would run for President again," Morris said.

"What do you mean—threatened?" Abe demanded. "You talk like Mr. Wilson running for President again was something to be scared about."

"I don't talk that way, but Mr. Cummings does," Morris said. "In fact, the Democratic National Committee, on the head of what Mr. Cummings said, passed a resolution that they were in favor of the prompt ratification by the Senate of the Treaty of Peace, including the League of Nations, so it would appear that the Democratic National Committee ain't so tickled about Mr. Wilson running again, neither."

"Well, if Mr. Wilson don't run again for President on the Democratic ticket, Mawruss, who will?" Abe inquired.

"I don't know, and, furthermore, I think that the Democratic National Committee is temporarily in the same condition about that proposition as Hawker and Grieve was about that cross-Atlantic proposition—also temporarily," Morris concluded, "I mean, up in the air."

XIX

THE LEAK AND OTHER MYSTERIES

"OUTSIDE of one poor night watchman *nebich*," Abe Potash said to his partner, Morris Perlmutter, "the only people which has really and truly suffered from the goings-on of them anarchists is the insurance companies, Mawruss."

"In a case like that, Abe, the insurance companies ain't liable under their policies," Morris said, "and they wouldn't got to pay no losses for the damage when them bombs done it to them buildings."

"Who said anything about the insurance companies paying losses?" Abe asked. "I am talking about the insurance companies paying lawyer bills, Mawruss, which I never read any of that part of my insurance policies that is printed in only such letters as could have been designed in the first place by them fellers you read about who go blind from engraving the whole of the Constitution of the United States on a ten-cent piece, y'understand, but I have no doubt, Mawruss, that it wouldn't make no difference if the loss was caused by anything so legitimate as throwing a lighted cigarette in a waste-paper basket, understand me, the only reason why an

insurance company pays any losses at all is that they figure it's cheaper to let the policyholder have the money than the bunch of murderers they got representing them as their general counsel."

"No doubt you're right," Morris agreed, "but in these here bomb outrages Abe, the way the police 'ain't been able to get a clue to so much as a suspicious red necktie, y'understand, it looks as though this bomb-exploding was going to be such a regular amusement with anarchists as pinochle-playing is with clothing salesmen, understand me, so the insurance companies would got to make a stand, otherwise they would be paying for new stoops for the houses of anybody and everybody who ever said an unkind word in public about Lenine and Trotzky."

"It seems to me that the police ain't so smart like they once used to be, Mawruss," Abe remarked.

"No, nor never was," Morris said. "In fact, Abe, from the number of crimes which has got into the let-bygones-be-bygones stage with the police lately, clues ain't of no more use to them fellers at all. What them detectives need is that the criminal should leave behind him at the scene of the crime a line of snappy, up-to-date advertising containing his name, address, and telephone number, otherwise they seem to think they have the excuse that they couldn't be expected to perform miracles, and let it go at that."

"I see where right here in New York, Mayor Hylan puts the whole thing up to the newspapers,"

Abe observed. "He wrote to a friend the other day one of them strictly confidential letters with an agreement on the side to ring up the reporters as soon as it was delivered, y'understand, in which he said the reason why so many crimes was going undiscovered by the police was that the newspapers was unprincipled enough to print that a lot of crimes was going undetected by the police, understand me, and the consequence was that criminals read it and, relying on the fact that the police wouldn't catch them if they committed crimes, they went to work and committed crimes."

"And I suppose them criminals' confidence in the police wasn't misplaced, neither," Morris suggested.

"Not so far as I've heard," Abe said, "but even if the newspapers wouldn't of printed the information, Mawruss, why should Mayor Hylan assume that burglars don't write each other letters occasionally, or, anyhow, once in a while meet at lunch and talk over business matters?"

"Well, I've noticed that Mayor Hylan, Mayor Thompson, and a lot of other Mayors, Senators, and people which is all the time getting into the public eye in the same sense as cinders and small insects, Abe, always blames the newspapers for everything that goes wrong," Morris remarked, "because such people is always doing and saying things that when it gets into the newspaper sounds pretty rotten even to themselves, understand me, so therefore they begin to think that the newspaper

is doing it deliberately, and consequently they get a grouch on against all newspapers."

"Sure, I know, Mawruss, but that don't excuse the police for not finding out who sent them bombs through the mails in the first place," Abe said. "It is now beginning to look, Mawruss, that the American police has begun to act philosophically about crooks, the way the American public has always done, and they shrug their shoulders and say, 'What are you going to do with a bunch of crooks like that?'"

"Well, in a way you can't blame the police for not catching them bomb-throwers, Abe," Morris said. "They've been so busy arresting people for violations of the automobile and traffic laws that they 'ain't hardly got time for nothing else, so you see what a pipe it is for criminals, Abe. All they have got to do is to keep out of automobiles and stick to street cars, and they can rob, murder, and explode bombs, and the police would never trouble them at all."

"But considering the number of people which gets arrested every day for things like having in their possession a bottle of schnapps, Mawruss, or smoking paper cigarettes in the second degree, or against the peace and dignity of the people of the State of Kansas or Virginia, and the statue in such case made and provided leaving a bottle of near-beer uncorked on the window-sill until it worked itself into a condition of being fermented or intoxicating liquor under section six sub-section (b) of the said act, y'understand, it is surprising

to me that the police didn't by accident gather in anyhow *one* of them anarchists, Mawruss," Abe said, "because, after all, Mawruss, it can't be that only respectable people violate all them prohibition, anti-cigarette, and anti-speeding laws, and that, outside of dropping bombs, anarchists is otherwise law-abiding."

"At the same time, Abe, I couldn't help feeling sorry for a policeman who would arrest an anarchist by accident, especially if he didn't carry any accident insurance, because the only way to avoid accidents in arresting anarchists is to take a good aim at a safe distance, and let somebody else search the body for packages," Morris declared.

"To tell you the truth, Mawruss, I think the reason why them anarchists which explode bombs is never discovered, y'understand, ain't up to the police at all, but to the contractor which cleans up the scene of the explosion," Abe said. "If he would only instruct his workmen to sift the rubbish before they cart it away, they might anyhow find a collar-button or something, because next to windows, Mawruss, the most breakage caused by anarchistic bomb explosions is to anarchists."

"Still, there must be a lot of comparatively uninjured anarchists hanging around—anarchists with only a thumb or so missing which the police would be able to find if they really and truly used a little gumption, Abe," Morris said. "Also if they would keep their ears open, there must be lots of noises which now passes for gas-range trou-

ble and which if investigated while the experimenter was still in the dancing and hand-flipping stage of agony, Abe, might bring to light some of the leading spirits in the chemical branch of the American anarchists. Then of course there is the other noises which sounds like gas-range troubles, and which on investigation proves to be speeches, Abe, and while it is probably true that you can't kill ideas by putting the people which owns up to them in jail, Abe, I for one am willing to take a chance and see how it comes out, because, after all, it ain't ideas which makes and explodes bombs, but the people which holds such ideas."

"Also, Mawruss," Abe said, "it is the people which holds such ideas that says you can't kill ideas by putting the people what holds them into jail, but just so soon as them people gets arrested, not only do they claim that they never held such ideas, but they deny that there even existed such ideas, and then the noise of the denials they are making is drowned out by the noise of the bombs which is being exploded according to the ideas they claim they don't hold, and that's the way it goes, Mawruss. The chances is that the mystery of who exploded them bombs will remain a mystery along with the mystery of how the Peace Treaty come into the possession of them New York interests in the form of a volume of three hundred and twenty pages, as Senator Lodge says it did."

"To me that ain't no mystery at all, Abe," Morris said. "The chances is that them New

York interests, whatever they may be, Abe—and I got my suspicions, Abe—simply seen it in the Saturday edition of one of them New York papers which makes a specialty of book-advertising, an advertisement reading:

"THE PEACE TERMS"

READ ABOUT THEM

in this stirring, heart-touching romance. Get it, begin it; you'll read every word and wish there was more.

Would it be worth while to risk the happiness of all future time for the sake of four years of forbidden pleasure? With the frankness characteristic of him, William W. Wilson in his latest work tells what happens—economically and spiritually—to the nation who tried it.

"THE PEACE TERMS"

BY

WILLIAM W. WILSON

Author of *A Thousand Snappy Substitutes for May I Not,* etc.

30 Illustrations, 320 pages. $1.50 net.

AT ALL BOOK-STORES

so the New York interests give the office-boy three dollars and says to him he should go 'round to the news-stands in the nearest subway station and buy a couple of them books, y'understand, and for the remainder of the afternoon, y'understand, the members of the New York interests which 'ain't got their feet up on the desk reading them books, is asking the members which has if they 'ain't got nothing better to do with their

time than to put it in reading a lot of nonsense like that, understand me."

"But who do you think published it, Mawruss?" Abe asked.

"Say!" Morris exclaimed. "It is already over a month since the first edition of that Peace Treaty was handed to the German delegates, and what is a little thing like a copyright to them crooks when it comes to making a profit of ten cents a volume? I bet yer that Europe is already flooded with pirated editions of that Peace Treaty retailing at anywheres from twenty-five cents up, and yet them highwaymen claims that it is unacceptable to them. As a matter of fact, the German business man 'ain't found anything nearly so acceptable in a merchandising way since the time they began to imitate Gillette safety razors and Kodak cameras. They'll probably make enough of the Park Row and Ann Street peddling rights alone to pay the first instalment of the reparation indemnity, Abe."

"I see where Austria also finds the terms of the Peace Treaty which was handed to her unacceptable, Mawruss," Abe remarked.

"Well, for that matter, Abe, there probably ain't a petitentiary in this or any other country which ain't filled with crooks who finds the terms of their punishment unacceptable," Morris said, "but I never heard it advanced as an argument why the sentence should ought to be upset on appeal, Abe. Also, Abe, Germany and Austria is in just so good a position to accept or not

accept their punishment as any other defendant would be after he has had his pedigree taken and is handcuffed to the deputy-sheriff with the Black Maria backed up against the curb, y'understand."

"Well, I suppose I must of lost thousands of dollars serving on juries in my time, Mawruss," Abe said, "and I would of lost thousands more if every prisoner would of behaved the way Germany and Austria has since the judge asked them if they had anything to say why sentence should ought to be passed on them. Evidently they must of thought it was up to them to make regular after-dinner speeches, leaving out only the once-there-was-an-Irishman story."

"And even that 'ain't been left out," Morris said, "which I see that the United States Senate has passed a resolution that they are in favor the Peace Conference should hear what the delegates from the new Irish Republic has got to say."

"Is Ireland a republic now?" Abe asked.

"It's anyhow as much of a republic as the Rhenish Republic is a republic or the Kingdom of the Hadjes is a kingdom," Morris continued, "which the American delegates let them Hadjes have their say, Abe, and if the Hadj-American vote figured very strong in the last presidential election or the Hadj-American subscribers to the Victory Loan represented as much as .000000001 per cent. of the total amount raised, the newspapers kept it pretty quiet, Abe. So, therefore, Abe, leaving out of the question alto-

gether that a very big percentage of the highest grade citizens which we've got in this country is Irish by ancestry and brains, Abe, why shouldn't the Irish have their say before the Peace Conference?"

"For one thing," Abe said, "the delegates to the Peace Conference is already pretty well acquainted with what them Irishmen would tell them, unless them delegates is deaf, dumb, and blind."

"That's all right, Abe, but a good argument was never the worse for being repeated," Morris concluded, "in especially when it comes from people which has given us not only good arguments during the past four years, but service, blood, and money. Am I right or wrong?"

XX

JULY THE FIRST AND AFTER

"IT'S already surprising what people will eat if they couldn't get anything else," Abe Potash commented one morning in June.

"Not nearly so surprising as what they would drink in the same circumstances," Morris Perlmutter remarked.

"Well, I don't know," Abe continued. "Here it stands in the newspapers where a professor says that for the information of them men which would sooner eat grasshoppers as starve, Mawruss, they taste very much like shrimps if you know how shrimps taste, which I am thankful to say that I don't, Mawruss, because I never yet had the nerve to eat shrimps on account of them looking too much like grasshoppers."

"That's nothing," Morris declared. "In Porto Rico, where they have had prohibition now for some time already, the authorities has just found out that the people has been drinking so much hair tonic as ersat-schnapps, Abe, that the insides of the stomach of a Porto-Rican looks like the outside of the President of the new Polish Republic, if you know what I mean."

"Well, if the prohibition law is going to be

enforced so as to confiscate the schnapps which is now being stored away by the people who have had an insurance actuary figure out their expectancy of life at ten drinks a day for 13.31416 years, Mawruss, or all the cellar will hold, y'understand," Abe said, "it won't be much later than July 2d before somebody discovers that there's quite a kick to furniture polish or 6-in-1, Mawruss, and in fact I expect to see after July 1st, 1919, that there would be what looks like stove polish, shoe polish, automobile-body polish, and silver polish retailing at from one dollar to a dollar and a half per hip-pocket-size bottle, which after being strained through blotting-paper, y'understand, would net the purchaser three drinks of the worst whisky that ever got sold on Chatham Square for five cents a glass."

"And I suppose that pretty soon they will be passing a law forbidding the manufacture of stove polish and directing that the labels on the bottles shall contain the statement:

"Stove Polish by Volume 2, Seventy-five per cent. And in a thimbleful of what ain't stove polish in that stove polish, Abe, there wouldn't be no more harm than two or three quarts of so much nitroglycerin, y'understand," Morris said. "Also on Saturday nights you will see the poor women *nebich* hanging around the swinging doors of paint and color stores right up to closing-time to see is their husbands inside, while the single men will stagger from house-furnishing store to house-furnishing store—or the Poor Men's Clubs,

as they call them places where stove and silver polish is sold."

"But joking to one side, Mawruss, you don't suppose that the Polaks and the Huns and all them foreigners is going to leave off drinking schnapps just because of a little thing like a prohibition amendment to the Constitution of the United States, do you?" Abe said.

"Why do you limit yourself to Polaks and Huns, Abe?" Morris asked. "Believe me, there is fellers whose forefathers was old established American citizens before Henry Clay started his cigar business, y'understand, and when them boys gets a craving for schnapps after July 1st, they would *oser* go to the nearest Carnegie Library and read over the Prohibition Amendment to the Constitution till that gnawing feeling at the pit of the stomach had passed away, understand me. At least, Abe, that is what I think is going to happen, and from the number of people which is giving out prophecies to the newspapers about what is going to happen, and from the way they differ from each other as to what is going to happen—not only about prohibition, but about conditions in Europe, the Next War, the Kaiser's future, and the next presidential campaign, y'understand, it seems to me that anybody could prophesy anything about *everything* and get away with it."

"They could anyhow get away with it till it does happen," Abe commented.

"Sure I know, but generally it don't happen," Morris said. "Take for instance where Mr. Van-

derlip is going round telling about the terrible things which is going to happen in Europe unless something which Mr. Vanderlip suggests is done, and take also for instance where Mr. Davison is going round telling about the terrible things which is going to happen in Europe unless something which Mr. *Davison* suggests is done, y'understand, and while I don't know nothing about Europe, understand me, I know something about Mr. Vanderlip, which is that he just lost his jobs as director of the War Savings Stamp Campaign and president of the National City Bank, and you know as well as I do, Abe, when a man has just lost his job things are apt to look pretty black to him, not only in Europe, understand me, but in Asia, Africa, and America, and sometimes Australia and New Zealand, also."

"Well, how about Mr. Davison?" Abe asked.

"Well, I'll tell you," Morris said, "Mr. Davison is a banker and I am a garment manufacturer, y'understand, and with me it's like this: Conditions in the garment trade is never altogether satisfactory to me, Abe. As a garment manufacturer, I can always see where things is going to the devil in this country or any other country where I would be doing business unless something is done, y'understand, and if anybody would ask me what *ought* to be done, the chances is that I would suggest something to be done which wouldn't make it exactly rotten for the garment trade, if you know what I mean."

"Mr. Vanderlip and Mr. Davison did good

work during the war for a dollar a year, Mawruss," Abe said, "and no one should speak nothing but good of them."

"Did I say they shouldn't?" Morris retorted. "All I am driving into is this, Abe; we've got a lot of big business men which during the war for a dollar a year give up their time to advising the United States what it should do, y'understand, who are now starting in to advise the world what it should do and waiving the dollar, Abe, and if there is anything which is calculated to make a man unpopular, Abe, it is giving free advice, so therefore I would advise all them dollar-a-year men to—"

"And is any one paying you to give such advice?" Abe asked. "Furthermore, Mawruss, nobody asks you for your advice, whereas with people like Mr. Vanderlip, Mr. Davison, the Crown Prince, Samuel Gompers, and Mary Pickford, y'understand, they couldn't stick their head outside the door without a newspaper reporter is standing there and starts right in to ask them their opinion about the things which they are supposed to know."

"And what is the Crown Prince supposed to know?" Morris asked.

"Not much that Mary Pickford don't about things in general," Abe said, "and a good deal less than she does about moving pictures, but otherwise I should put them about on a par, except that Mary Pickford has got a brighter future, Mawruss, which I see that one of these here news-

paper fellers got an interview with the Crown Prince which 'ain't been denied as yet. It took place in an island in Holland where the Crown Prince is living in retirement with a private chef, a private secretary, a couple of private valets, his personal physician, and the nine or ten other personal attendants that a Hohenzollern cuts himself down to while he is roughing it in Holland, Mawruss. When the newspaper feller spoke to him he was wearing the uniform of a colonel in the Eighth Pomeranian Crown Prince's Own Regiment, which is now known as the William J. Noske Association, of black tulle over a midnight-blue satin underdress—the whole thing embroidered in gray silk braid and blue beads. A very delicate piece of rose point-lace was arranged as a fichu, Mawruss, and over it he wore a Lavin cape of black silk jersey with a monkey-fur collar and slashed pockets. It would appear from the article which the newspaper feller wrote that the Crown Prince didn't seem to be especially talkative."

"In these here interviews which newspaper fellers gets in Europe, Abe," Morris commented, "the party interviewed never does seem to be talkative. In fact, he hardly figures at all, because such articles usually consist of fifty per cent. what a lot of difficulties the correspondent was smart enough to overcome in getting the interview, twenty-five per cent. description, twenty-two and a quarter what the correspondent said to the party interviewed, and not more than two and three-quarters per cent. interview."

"Whatever way it was, Mawruss, the Crown Prince didn't exactly unbosom himself to this here reporter, but he said enough to show that he wasn't far behind Mr. Vanderlip when it comes to taking a dark view of things as a result of losing his job, Mawruss," Abe continued.

"Probably he took even a darker view of it than Mr. Vanderlip," Morris suggested, "because there are lots of openings for bank president, but if you are out of a job as a crown prince, what *is* it, in particular if your reference ain't good?"

"He didn't seem to be worrying about his own future," Abe continued, "but he seemed to think that if the old man got tried by the Allies, Mawruss, the shock would kill him."

"Many a murderer got tried by the Court of General Sessions, even, and subsequently the shock killed them, Abe," Morris said. "What is electric chairs for, *anyway?*"

"But he told the reporter that you wouldn't have any idea how old the old man is looking," Abe went on.

"He shouldn't take so much wood-cutting exercise," Morris said. "The first thing you know, he would injure himself for life, even if he ain't going to live long."

"Don't fool yourself, Mawruss," Abe said, "the Kaiser ain't going to die from nothing more violent than a rich, unbalanced diet, y'understand, and as for the Crown Prince, he's got it all figured out that he will return to Germany and go into the farming business, and there ain't no provided-I-

beat-the-indictment about it, neither, because he knows as well as you do that the Allies would never have the nerve to try either one of them crooks."

"Nobody seems to have the nerve to do anything nowadays, except the Bolshevists, Abe," Morris said, with a sigh. "Here up to a few days ago the Bolshevist government of Russia had been running a New York office on West Forty-second Street, with gold lettering on the door, a staff of stenographers, and a private branch exchange, and the New York police didn't pay no more attention to them than if they would of been running a pool-room with a roulette-wheel in the rear office. The consequence was that when them Bolshevists finally got pulled, Abe, they beefed so terrible about how they were being prosecuted in violation of the Constitution and the Code of Civil Procedure, y'understand, that you would think the bombs which Mr. Palmer and them judges nearly got killed with was being exploded pursuant to Section 4244 of the United States Revised Statutes and the acts amendatory thereof, Abe."

"And we let them cutthroats do business yet!" Abe exclaimed.

"Well, in a way, I don't blame the Bolshevists for not knowing how to take the behavior of the American government towards them, Abe," Morris declared. "If we only had one way of treating them and stick *to* it, Abe, it would help people like this here ex-custom-house feller Dudley Field Malone and this ex-Red Cross feller Robins to

know where they stood in the matter of Bolshevism. But when even the United States army itself don't know whether it is for the Bolshevists or against them, Abe, how could you expect this here Robins to know, either, let alone the Bolshevists?"

"But I thought this country was against Bolshevism," Abe said.

"As far as I can gather, Abe, the United States is against Bolshevism officially on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, and on Saturday from nine to twelve, and it is for Admiral Kolchak on Tuesday and Thursday," Morris said. "At any rate, that's what one would think from reading the newspapers. Fiume is the same way, Abe. The United States is in favor of ceding Fiume to the Italians during three days in the week of eight working-hours each, except in the sporting five-star edition, when Fiume is going to be internationalized. However, Abe, the United States wants to be quite fair about preserving the rights of small nationalities, so we concede Fiume to the Jugo-Slobs in at least two editions of the pink evening papers and in the special magazine section of the Sunday papers."

"Well, the way I feel about Bolshevism, I am against it every day in the week, including Sundays, Mawruss," Abe said, "and if I would be running a newspaper, I would show them up in every edition from the night edition that comes out at half past eight in the morning, down to the special ten-o'clock-p.m. extra, which sometimes is

delayed till as late as five forty-five. Furthermore, while variety makes a spicy life, Mawruss, newspapers are supposed to tell you the news, and while it may be agreeably exciting to some people when they read on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday that the Germans would positively sign the amended Treaty of Peace, and on Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday that they positively wouldn't do nothing of the kind, y'understand, I am getting so used to it that it don't even make me mad no longer."

"The newspapers has got to suit all tastes, Abe," Morris observed.

"But the taste for Bolshevism ain't a taste, Mawruss, it's a smell," Abe concluded, "and whoever has got it shouldn't ought to be encouraged. He should ought to be disinfected, and that's all there is to it."

XXI

WHAT THE PUBLIC WANTS, ECONOMICALLY AND THEATRICALLY

"I SEE where a minister said the other day he couldn't understand why it was that fellers in the theayter business goes to work and puts on the kind of shows which they do put on, Mawruss," Abe Potash said, a few days after the ministerial controversy over a certain phase of the Broadway drama.

"Maybe they got hopes that quite a number of people would pay money to see such shows, Abe," Morris suggested, "because so far as I could tell from the few fellers in the theayter business whose acquaintance I couldn't avoid making, Abe, they are business men the same like other business men, y'understand, and what they are trying to do is to suit the tastes of their customers."

"But what them ministers claims is that them customers shouldn't ought to have such tastes," Abe said.

"That is up to the ministers and not the fellers in the theayter business," Morris said. "Theayter managers ain't equipped in the head to give people lectures on how terrible it is that people should like to see the plays they like to see, be-

cause as a general thing a feller in the theayter business is the same as a feller in the garment business or grocery business—he didn't have to pass no examination to go into such a business, and what a theayter feller don't know about delivering sermons, Abe, if a minister would know it about the show business, y'understand, instead of drawing down three thousand a year telling people to do what they don't want to do, understand me, he would be looking round for a nice, fully rented, sixteen-story apartment-house in which to invest the profits from a show by the name, we would say, for example, 'Early to Bed.'"

"But the trouble with the theayter fellers is that they think any show which a lot of people would pay money to see, Mawruss, is a good show," Abe declared.

"Why shouldn't the managers think that?" Morris asked. "If the ministers had the people trained right, any show which a lot of people would pay money to see should *ought* to be a good show."

"You think the ministers could train people to like a good show!" Abe exclaimed. "It's human nature for people to like the kind of show they do like, Mawruss, and how could ministers, even if they would be the biggest *tzadeekim* in the world, change human nature?"

"That's what I am trying to tell you, Abe," Morris said. "The theayter managers simply supply a demand which already exists, Abe, and they are as much to blame for the conditions

which creates that demand as you could blame a manufacturer of heavy-weight underwear for cold winter weather."

"But why should the theayter manager try to supply an unhealthy demand, Mawruss?" Abe asked

"The demand for heavy winter underwear is also unhealthy, Abe," Morris said. "In America, where the houses is heated, heavy underwear would give you a cold, whereas in Norway and Sweden the demand for heavy underwear is healthy because Norway and Sweden houses is like Norway and Sweden plays, Abe, they are constructed differently from the American fashion. They are built solid, but there ain't no light and heat in them, and yet, Abe, the highbrows which is kicking about the American style of plays is crazy about these here Norway and Sweden plays and want American theayter managers to put on plays like them. In other words, Abe, they are arguing in favor of the manufacture and sale of heavy winter underwear for an exclusively B. V. D. trade, and so, therefore, such highbrows could be ministers or they could be dramatic crickets, Abe, but they might just so well save their breath with such arguments, because the customer buys what he *wants* to buy, and what the customer *wants* to buy the manufacturer manufactures, and that's all there is *to* it."

"And now that you have settled this here question of them 'Early to Bed' plays, Mawruss," Abe said, "would you kindly tell me what the idea

of them Germans was in sinking all them white-elephant war-ships which everybody with any sense wished was at the bottom of the ocean, *anyway*, y'understand?"

"Well, I'll tell you, Abe," Morris began. "Them Germans being German, y'understand, and having signed an armistice where they agreed to take them war-ships to an Allied port and *keep* them there, y'understand, just couldn't resist breaking their word and sinking them war-ships."

"But don't you think, Mawruss, that when the Allies allowed the Germans to sign such an armistice they was awful careless," Abe said, "because if they wanted them war-ships to stay afloat, Mawruss, all they had to do was to make the Germans sign an agreement not to take them war-ships to Allied ports and sink them there, and the thing was done."

"How do you know that the Allies didn't get them Germans to agree the way they did, so as to get rid of all them war-ships without the trouble and expense of blowing them up?" Morris asked.

"I don't know it," Abe admitted, "but even to-day yet, Mawruss, them Allied diplomatists is acting like they thought deep down in their hearts that there was a little honor—a little truth—left in them Germans somewhere, Mawruss, so the chance is that when that armistice was signed, the Allies thought that at last the Germans was going to stand by a signed agreement. However, it seems to me, Mawruss, that there should ought

to be an end to this here better-luck-next-time attitude towards the Germans' idea of honor on the part of the Allies."

"Well, what are you going to do with such people, Abe?" Morris asked.

"To me it's a business proposition, Mawruss," Abe said, "and the way I feel about this here Peace Treaty is that it is nothing but composition notes, signed by the Germans without indorsement by anybody. Now you know as well as I do, Mawruss, if a bankrupt owes you money and he has got *some* assets, you ain't going to take composition notes for the entire amount of debts and let the bankrupt keep the remains of his assets, because composition notes without indorsements don't deceive nobody, Mawruss. If I get from a bankrupt unindorsed composition notes, I simply put them away in my safe and forget about them, which if a bankrupt ever paid his unindorsed composition notes he would be adding murder to his other crimes on account the holders of such composition notes would drop dead from astonishment."

"The death-rate from such a cause among business men ain't high, Abe," Morris commented.

"If I was an accident-insurance company's actuary, I would take a chance and leave such a cause of death out of my calculations," Abe agreed. "It never happens, and so, therefore, Mawruss, if Germany lives up to the terms of the Peace Treaty it would only be because the German signature is guaranteed by the indorsement of a large Allied

Army of Occupation, and, therefore, if we've got to do it first as last, why monkey around with a new German Cabinet? Why not close up the Peace Conference *sine die*, tell Germany her composition notes ain't acceptable, y'understand, and proceed to make a levy and sale with the combined armies of the Allies as deputy-sheriffs, Mawruss, because not only are the Germans bankrupts, but they are fraudulent bankrupts, and on fraudulent bankrupts nobody should have no mercy at all?"

"But don't you think it might be just as well to give the Germans a few days' grace and see how this here new Cabinet goes to work?" Morris suggested.

"You don't have to know how it works, Mawruss," Abe replied. "All you have to do is to know how it was formed and you can guess how it would work, which I bet yer that Erzberger got together with von Brockdorff-Rantzau and they combed over the list of candidates to get just the right kind of people for a German Cabinet, because the ordinary tests which they use in England, France, or America, Mawruss, don't apply to Germany. You've got to be awful careful in forming a German Cabinet, Mawruss, otherwise you are liable to have slipped in on you just one decent, respectable man with an idea of keeping his word and doing the right thing, Mawruss, and by a little carelessness like that, understand me, the whole Cabinet is ruined. However, Mawruss, you could take it from me that a couple of experienced Cabinet-formers like this here Erzberger

and von Brockdorff-Rantzau didn't fall down on their job, and I bet yer that every member of the new Cabinet is keeping up the best traditions of the good old German spirit, which is to be able to look the whole world straight in the eye and lie like the devil, y'understand."

"Then you think this Cabinet wouldn't act no different to the other Cabinets?" Morris said.

"Not if the Allies don't act different," Abe said, "and where the Allies made their first big mistake was the opening session at Versailles, when the usher or the janitor or whoever had charge of such things didn't take von Brockdorff-Rantzau by the back of his neck and yank him to his feet after he started to talk without rising from his chair, because the Germans is very quick to take a tip that way, Mawruss. Whatever they put over once, they think they could put over again, and since that time all arguments the Germans has made about the Peace Treaty have been, so to speak, delivered by the German people and the German Cabinet, not only seated, y'understand, but also with the feet cocked up on the desk, the hat on, and in the corner of the mouth a typical German cigar which is made up of equal parts hay and scrap rubber blended with the *Vossicher Zeitung* and beet-tops and smells accordingly."

"Well, it is one of the good qualities of the American people that before they get good and sore, as they have a right to do, Abe, they will put up with a whole lot of bad manners from people that they deal with," Morris said. "Take, for

instance, these here foreign-born Reds which they held a meeting in Madison Square Garden the other evening, and if they said in any other country about the government what they said in Madison Square Garden, y'understand, the owner of Madison Square Garden would of pocketed thousands of dollars for the moving-picture rights of the bayoneting alone. But we don't do business that way. There ain't no satisfaction in bayoneting a lot of people for being fresh and not knowing how to behave. Fining them and putting them in prison is also no relief to our feeling, neither. What we really itch to do, Abe, is to act the way a man would act if he gives somebody food and shelter in his home, and, as soon as such a *schnorrer* feels refreshed by what he has eaten and the good bed he has slept in, he turns on his host and, after insulting the members of the household, tries to wreck the furniture and set the house on fire. Such a feller you would first kick as many times as you had the strength; you would then duck him in the nearest body of water, provided it was muddy enough, and after he had come up for the third time you would fish him out and ride him on a rail to the town limits and there you would advise him never to show his face around them parts again."

"But as I understand this here Red meeting, Mawruss," Abe said, "it was something more as not knowing how to behave. Practically every speaker told the audience that they should rise up against the government."

"Sure I know, Abe," Morris agreed, "but the audience was composed of people who had already made up their minds that they should rise up against the government, and there is only one thing which prevents them from rising up—they 'ain't got the nerve. Furthermore, them speakers could go on advising till they got clergyman's sore throat from the violent language they was using, and that audience could sit there being advised till the management of Madison Square Garden dispossessed the meeting for non-payment of rent, y'understand, and still that audience wouldn't have the nerve. Them Reds are a lot of rabbits, Abe. They could rise up in Russia and Hungary against a lot of rabbits, y'understand, but over here the most them rabbits has got the courage to do is to plant a few bombs, of which one or two has been ungrateful enough to bite the hand that threw them, understand me, but as soon as them Red rabbits discovers that the percentage of mortality among bomb-throwers is equal to the death-rate from some such rare disease as sleeping-sickness or beriberi, Abe, they wouldn't even have the nerve to throw bombs."

"Still, I think the District Attorney should ought to do something about that Madison Square meeting, Mawruss," Abe said, "because even if Madison Square Garden would have been only one-tenth filled, considering the high price of rails in the present steel-market and the distance of Madison Square from muddy water, Mawruss, it would be anyhow unpractical to duck or ride on

rails the number of Reds which attended that meeting, even supposing enough respectable people could be found who would take the trouble."

"As a matter of fact, Abe," Morris said, "it don't even pay to encourage them speech-making Reds by thinking they are important enough to be ducked in muddy water. After all, most of them are still young and sooner or later they would got to go to work, and once a man goes to work in this country it is only a matter of time when he gets up into the capitalistic class."

"There is also another thing to be considered about these here Reds, Mawruss," Abe said. "As Reds, they couldn't be taken altogether seriously, because Reds would be Reds only up to a certain point. After that they're Yellow."

XXII

THEY DISCUSS THE SIGNING OF IT

"YES, Mawruss, when the history of this here Peace Conference is written, y'understand, a whole lot of things which up to now has been mysteries will be made very plain to the people which has got twenty-five dollars to invest in such a history and the spare time in which to read it," Abe Potash said to his partner Morris Perlmutter a few days after the treaty was signed.

"There will be a great many people who will try to find the time at that," Morris commented, "because I see by the morning paper that one of Mr. Wilson's relatives has bought for him in Southern California a piece of property especially for Mr. Wilson to write the history of the Peace Conference in, and why should he go to all that expense if there wasn't a big market for such a history?"

"I wonder did Mr. Wilson have to pay much money for the history rights to the Peace Conference?" Abe asked.

"What do you mean—did he pay much money?" Morris exclaimed. "Anybody can write a history of the Peace Conference without paying a cent for the privilege, and even if they couldn't,

y'understand, who is going to bid against Mr. Wilson, because when it comes to what actually happened at them confidential meetings between Mr. Wilson, Clemenceau, and Lord George, Abe, Mr. Wilson had a monopoly of the raw material in the history line. He didn't even let Colonel House in on it, so you can bet your life if there was any competitors of Mr. Wilson trying to get a few ideas for a competing line of popular-price Peace Conference histories, Abe, Mr. Wilson didn't exactly unbosom himself to them historians, neither, because a diplomatic secret is a diplomatic secret, Abe, but when in addition, the diplomat is counting on writing a history of them diplomatic doings, Abe, diplomatic secrets become trade secrets."

"It seems to me, Mawruss, that while you couldn't blame Mr. Wilson for writing a history of the Peace Conference for a living after he loses his job in March, 1921," Abe continued, "still at the same time, considering that Mr. Wilson has taken such a prominent part in this here Peace Conference, and considering also that Mr. Wilson is only human, no matter what Senator Reed might say otherwise, don't you think he is going to have a difficult time in deciding for himself just where history leaves off and advertising begins?"

"The probabilities is that he wouldn't give himself a shade the worst of it, if that's what you mean," Morris observed, "but as to whether or not such a history would be the equivalent of an

actor writing a criticism of his own performance, Abe, that I couldn't say, because the chances is that when Lord George gets through with the job of chief Cabinet Minister or whatever his job is called, he would also try his hand at writing a history, and if that is the case, you could make up your mind to it that Clemenceau ain't going to sit down at his time of life and let them two historians put it all over him. So, therefore, if Mr. Wilson should feel like writing in his history: 'At this point, things was at a standstill and nobody seemed to know what to do next, when suddenly some one made a suggestion which cleared up the whole situation. It was Woodrow Wilson who spoke'—y'understand, he will figure that Lord George is probably going to say in his history: 'At this point the Peace Conference was up against it and it looked like the bottom had fallen out of everything, when like a voice from heaven, somebody made a remark which smoothed away all difficulties. It was Lord George who came to the rescue.' The consequence will be that both of them historians will beat Clemenceau to it, by giving credit for the suggestion to the feller who made it, even if it would have been Orlando himself."

"But suppose Mr. Wilson actually did make the suggestion, Mawruss, and in the interests of telling the strict truth about the matter, he feels that he is obliged to mention it in his history," Abe said, "he's bound to run up against a big chorus of *Yows!*"

"Well, so far as I could see, nobody compels Mr. Wilson to write a history of that Peace Conference if he don't want to," Morris replied, "and if he should decide not to do so, he could always rent that Southern California property furnished for the season, or if he feels that he must occupy it himself for history business purposes, he could anyhow write a domestic History of the United States from December 5, 1918, to July 6, 1919, both inclusive, in which his name need hardly occur at all. But joking to one side, Abe, when the history of this here Peace Conference gets written, it don't make no difference who writes it, he ain't going to be able to ignore Mr. Wilson exactly. In fact, Abe, the history of this here Peace Conference is going to be more or less principally about Mr. Wilson, and if the feller who writes it wouldn't be exactly Senator Lodge, y'understand, the truth is bound to leak out that Mr. Wilson did a wonderful job over in Paris. Of course he made a whole lot of enemies over here, but then he also made a whole lot of peace over there, Abe, and, after all, that is what he went there for."

"Still I couldn't help thinking that from a business point of view, Mawruss, the Peace Conference suffered a good deal from poor management," Abe said. "Take for instance the signing of the Peace Treaty in Mirror Hall, Versailles, and properly worked up, the Allies could of made enough out of that one show alone to pay for all the ships that Germany sank a few days ago,

which holding a thing like that in a hall, Mawruss, is a sample of what kind of management there was."

"They had the Germans sign that Peace Treaty in that hall because it was the same hall where them Germans made the French sign the Peace Treaty in 1870," Morris explained.

"Sure I know," Abe said, "but what did they know about such things in 1870? Even grand opera they gave in halls in them days, which, considering the amount of interest there was in the signing of the Peace Treaty, Mawruss, I bet yer enough people was turned away from Mirror Hall, Versailles, to more than fill five halls of the same size. As it was, Mawruss, so many people crowded into that Mirror Hall that nobody could see anything, and the consequence was that when Clemenceau begun his speech the disorder was something terrible."

"I suppose his opening remark was: 'Koosh! What is this? A *Kaffeeklatsch* or something?'" Morris remarked, satirically.

"It might just so well have been, for all anybody heard of it," Abe went on. "In fact, the papers say that all through it there was loud cries of, 'Down in front!' from people which had probably bought their tickets at the last moment off of a speculator who showed them a diagram of Mirror Hall, Batesville, and not Versailles, on which it looked like they was getting four good ones in the fifth row, center aisle, Mawruss."

"Probably also while Clemenceau was speak-

ing, there was difficulty in calling off the score-card and ice-cream-cone venders," Morris said.

"I am telling you just exactly what I read it in the newspapers," Abe said, "which there ain't no call to get sarcastic, Mawruss. The signing of that treaty was arranged just the same like any other show is arranged, except that the arrangements wasn't quite so good. The idea was to make it impressive by keeping it very plain, and that is where the Allies, to my mind, made a big mistake, because the people to be impressed was the Germans, and what sort of an impression would that signing of the Peace Treaty by delegates in citizen clothes make on a country where a station agent looks like a colonel and a colonel looks like the combined annual conventions of the Knights of Pythias and the I. O. M. A."

"The chances is that the Allies did the best they could with the short time they had for preparation, because you must got to remember that the Germans didn't make up their minds to sign till two days before the signing, and considering that the President of the United States wears only the uniform prescribed by the double-page advertisements of Rochester, Chicago, and Baltimore clothing manufacturers for people who ride in closed cars, two days is an awful short time to hire a really impressive uniform, let alone to have one made to order, Abe," Morris said. "Furthermore, Abe, the signing of that Peace Treaty could have been put on by the feller that runs off these here Follies with the assistance of

George M. Cohan and the management of the Metropolitan Opera House, y'understand, and the costumes could have been designed by Ringling Brothers, with a few hints from Rogers, Peet, understand me, and I don't believe them Germans would stick to the terms of the treaty anyway."

"Europe should worry about that, Mawruss," Abe said. "The main thing is that the peace is signed and the last of our boys would soon be home again from Europe, and once we get them back again in this country, Mawruss, it *oser* would make any difference to us whether Germany keeps the treaty or she don't keep it, Mawruss, the chances of us sending our boys back again is pretty slim."

"But under section ten of the League Covenant, Abe," Morris began, "the time might come when we would got to send them."

"Maybe," Abe admitted, "but if any of them European nations has got the idea that because Germany is going to be slow pay we would oblige with a few million troops, Mawruss, they've got another idea coming. We are a nation, not a collection agency, and no amount of section tens is going to make us one, either."

"Well, that is the danger of this here League of Nations, Abe," Morris said, "and if the Senate ratifies it, we are not only a collection agency, but a burglar insurance company as well, and in fact some of the Senators goes so far as to say that we ain't so much insuring people against the

operations of burglars as insuring burglars against the loss of their *ganevas*."

"I know the Senators is saying that, and I also know that Mr. Wilson says it ain't so," Abe agreed, "but this here fuss about international affairs has got what the lawyers calls a statue of limitations running against it right now, and I give both Mr. Wilson and the Senate six months, and they will be going round saying: 'Do you remember when six months ago we got so terrible worked up over that—now—National League,' and somebody who is sitting near them will ask, for the sake of having things just right, 'You mean that League of Nations, ain't it?' and Mr. Wilson will say: 'League of Nations! National League! What's the difference? Let's have another round of Old Dr. Turner's Favorite Asparagus Tonic and forget about it.'"

"So you think that all this international politics will be forgotten as quickly as that?" Morris commented.

"Say!" Abe said, "it won't take long for Mr. Wilson to settle down into American ways again. Of course it will be pretty hard for him during the first few weeks, whenever he gets a sick headache, to send out for a doctor instead of an admiral, and he may miss his evening *schmooes* with Clemenceau, Lord George, and Orlando, but any one that will have such a lot of *clav hasholom* times to talk over as Mr. Wilson will for the rest of his life, even if he does have to hold out some of the stuff for his History of the Peace Con-

ference in three volumes, price twenty-five dollars, Mawruss, would never need to play double solitaire in order to fill in the time between supper and seeing is the pantry window locked in case Mrs. Wilson is nervous that way. Then again there is things happening in this country which looked very picayune to Mr. Wilson over in France, and which will seem so big when he arrives here that almost as soon as he sets his foot on the dock in Hoboken, the League of Nations will get marked off in his mind for depreciation as much as a new automobile does by merely having the owner's number plates attached to it, even if it ain't been run two miles from the agency yet."

"I never thought of it that way," Morris admitted, "but it is a fact just the same that this here League of Nations is only being operated at the present time under a demonstrator's license, so to speak, and as soon as it gets its regular number, the manufacturers and the agents won't be so sensitive about the knocks that the prospective customers is handing it."

"And just so soon as the demonstrations have gone far enough, Mawruss, just you watch all the nations of the earth that ain't made up their minds whether they want to ride or not, jump aboard," Abe said. "Also, Mawruss, this League of Nations is to the United States Senate what a new-car proposition is to the head of any respectable family. If the wife wants it and the children wants it, it may be that the old man will think it over for a couple of weeks, and he may begin by

saying that the family would get a new car over his dead body, and what do they think he is made of, money? y'understand, but sooner or later he is going to sign up for that new car, and don't you forget it. And after all, Mawruss, if the other big nations is in on this League of Nations, we could certainly afford to pay our share of what it costs to run it."

"Maybe we could," Morris concluded, "but if a new League of Nations is like a new automobile, we are probably in for an expensive time, because with a new car, Abe, it ain't what you run that costs so much money. It's what you back into."

XXIII

THE RECENT UNPLEASANTNESS IN TOLEDO, OHIO

"IF we would only had our wits about us the day we sent for the policeman to put out that feller we had running the elevator, Mawruss, we could of made quite a lot of money maybe," Abe Potash remarked to Morris Perlmutter a few days after the heavy-weight title changed hands.

"If we would only had our wits about us and you had taken my advice to let the feller sleep off his jag instead of hauling in a policeman to wake him up and throw him out, Abe," Morris said, "they wouldn't of broken, between them, fifty dollars' worth of fixtures and ruined a lot of garments on us."

"Well, that's what I mean, Mawruss, which is forty-five thousand people could be persuaded into paying anywheres from ten to a hundred dollars apiece to see that nine-minute affair in Toledo where the two loafers didn't have nothing against one another personally and couldn't of kept their minds on the fight anyhow for trying to figure their share of the profits, y'understand, what would them forty-five thousand *meshugoyim* paid to see for twenty minutes a couple of fellers

which they really and truly wanted to kill each other without any intermissions of so much as two seconds, Mawruss?" Abe said.

"Well, I'll tell you, Abe," Morris said, "these here fight fans are the same like moving-picture fans; they would a whole lot sooner pay out money to see the imitation article than the real thing. Tell one of these here fight fans that for ten cents you would let him know where at half past nine o'clock on Monday morning an iron-molder has got an appointment to meet a stevedore who used to be engaged to the iron-molder's sister and now refuses to return the twenty-five dollars he borrowed from her to get the wedding-ring and the marriage license, and the fight fan would ask you what is that *his* business. Tell a moving-picture fan that there is a family over on Tenth Avenue where the father is a ringer for William S. Hart and is *also* in jail, y'understand, and that such a family is about to be dispossessed for non-payment of rent, understand me, and if you made an offer to such a moving-picture fan, that for a contribution of fifteen cents toward finding the family a new home, you would show him a close-up of the landlord, of the notice to quit and of the court-room of the Municipal Court of the City of New York for the Eleventh Judicial District where such proceedings are returnable, understand me, the moving-picture fan wouldn't come across with a nickel, not even if you undertook to engage the entire combined orchestras of the Strand, the Rivoli, and the Rialto moving-

picture theaters to play 'Hearts and Flowers' while the furniture was being piled on the moving-van."

"I wouldn't blame the moving-picture fan at that, Mawruss," Abe said, "because if such a moving-picture fan would see one of these here harrowing William S. Hart and Mary Pickford incidents in real life, Mawruss, when it reached the point where the moving-picture fan's heart is going to break unless there would be a quick happy ending, y'understand, not only would there *not* be a happy ending, but also, Mawruss, instead of the next incident being a Mack Sennett comedy in real life, Mawruss, it might be something so sad, y'understand, that if a moving-picture corporation would try to reproduce it on the screen, it would cost them a fortune for glycerin alone."

"A moving-picture fan's heart don't break so easy as all that, Abe," Morris said. "Moving-picture fans is like doctors and undertakers, Abe. They've got so used to other people's misfortunes that it practically don't affect them at all. Moving-picture fans can see William S. Hart come out of jail to find his wife married to the detective who not only arrested him in the first reel, but is also giving terrible *makkas* to Mr. Hart's youngest child in the second reel, y'understand, and wrings that moving-picture fan's heart to the same extent like it would be something in a tropical review entitled: 'Eighth Annual Convention of the United Ice-men of America, Akron, Ohio. Arrival of the Delegates at the Akron, Union, Depot,' y'under-

stand. Yes, Abe, the effect of five-reel films on a moving-picture fan's heart is like the effect of five-star Scotch whisky on a typical clubman's life. It hardens it to such an extent that it practically ceases to do the work for which it was originally put into a human body, Abe."

"To tell you the truth, Mawruss, I 'ain't got no use for any kind of a fan, and that goes for moving-picture fans, fight fans, baseball fans, and pinochle fans, not to mention grand-opera fans, first-night theayter fans, and every other fan from golluf downwards. Take these here fight fans which chartered special trains for Toledo, Ohio, and paid a hundred dollars for a ringside seat, Mawruss, and to my mind it would take one of these here insanity experts to figure out just what made them do it at a time when on account of the raise in rent and living expenses, so many heads of families is staying home with their families these hot Sundays and reading the papers about the fight fans chartering special trains and paying a hundred dollars for ringside seats, and not feeling the heat any the less because of reading such things. Also, Mawruss, as one business man to another who has had the experience of riding on a sleeper and making Cleveland, Toledo, Detroit, and Chicago even under normal travel conditions, Mawruss, I ask you, where is the pleasure in such a trip?"

"Them fight fans don't do it for pleasure, Abe," Morris said. "They do it for a reputation."

"A reputation for what?" Morris asked.

"A reputation for having paid the United States Railroad Administration twice the regular fare to Toledo for a railroad journey, and also the reputation for having paid the manager of this here prize-fight fifty times the regular price of a ticket for a legitimate entertainment," Morris replied.

"But what for a reputation is that for a sane man to get?" Abe asked.

"Well," Morris commented, "for that matter, what kind of a reputation does the same man get when he pays fifty dollars to reserve a table at a Broadway restaurant on New-Year's Eve? That's where your friend the insanity expert comes in, Abe. It's the kind of a reputation which the people among which such a feller has got it—when they talk about it says: 'And suppose he did. What *of* it?'"

"It seems to me, Mawruss, that when a feller gets the reputation for having such a reputation, his friends should ought to tip him off that if he don't be mighty careful, the first thing you know he would be getting that kind of a reputation," Abe said, "because there is also a whole lot of other people among which he got that reputation, who wouldn't stop at saying: 'Suppose he did. What *of* it?' They would try to figure out the answer upon the basis that a feller who pays a hundred dollars for a ringside seat to see a fight which lasted nine minutes, y'understand, and his money, understand me, are soon parted, and

the first thing you know, Mawruss, that poor *nebich* of a prize-fight fan would be unable to attend the next annual heavy-weight championship of the world to be held in Yuma, Arizona, or some such summer resort, in August, 1921, simply because the United States Railroad Administration refused to accept for his transportation in lieu of cash two thousand shares of the Shapiro Texas Oil and Refining Corporation of the par value of one hundred dollars apiece, notwithstanding that he also offers to throw in a couple of hundred shares of a farm-tractor manufacturing corporation and lots 120 to 135, both inclusive, in Block 654 on a map filed in the office of the clerk of Atlantic County, New Jersey, entitled Map of Property of the East by Southeast, Atlantic City Land and Development Company."

"Well, it would serve such a feller right if such a thing did happen to him," Morris commented, "because any one who takes an interest in such a disgusting affair as this here fight should not only lose his money, but he should ought to go to jail."

"I give you right, Mawruss," Abe replied. "And why the newspapers print the reports of such a thing is a mystery to me. Here there are happenings, happenings over in Europe which is changing the history of the world every twenty-four hours, Mawruss, and to this one prize-fight which a man has got to be a loafer not to get sick at his stomach over it, Mawruss, they are devoting practically the entire newspaper. I give you my

word, Mawruss, it took me pretty near three hours to read it last night."

"At the same time, Abe," Morris said, "you would think that a man of this here Jeff Willard's fighting record wouldn't of give up so easy."

"Look what he was up against," Abe reminded him. "There 'ain't been a fighter in years with this feller Dempsey's speed and science, Mawruss."

"But I don't think that Willard was trained right, Abe," Morris said.

"What do you mean—not trained right?" Abe retorted. "From what the newspapers has been saying during the past few weeks, Mawruss, he was in wonderful condition, and his sparring partners seemingly could hit him on any part of his face and body, and it never seemed to affect him any."

"Sure I know," Morris agreed, "but what for a training was that for a rough affair like this here prize-fight turned out to be, which if I would of been this here Jeff Willard's manager, Abe, I wouldn't of put no faith in sparring partners. A sparring partner is only human—that is to say, if any prize-fighter could be human—and naturally such a sparring partner ain't going to do himself out of a good job by going too far and seriously injuring a heavyweight champion. The consequences was, Abe, that this here Jeff Willard went into the ring, confident that he couldn't be knocked down by a blow from a fighter like Dempsey, simply because he had no experience in being knocked down by a blow."

"Maybe he couldn't of been knocked down by a blow from his sparring partners," Abe suggested. "Maybe they weren't strong enough."

"That's just what I'm driving into, Abe," Morris said, "which if instead of Willard's manager wasting time by trying to have sparring partners knock him down, he would have gone to work and had Willard knocked down by something which could really and truly knock him down, like a Fifth Avenue stage or a heavy automobile delivery truck, y'understand, the result might have been very different."

"Sure I know," Abe said, "but you could easy overdo such a training method, Mawruss, and end up with an autopsy instead of a prize-fight. Also, Mawruss, the way it looked to experts after this here fight had been pulled off, where Willard made his mistake was in training to receive punishment instead of training to give it."

"Willard didn't believe in training to give punishment," Morris said. "If he had believed in it, he could have gone over to Europe and received pretty nearly a year and a half of the very best training a prize-fighter could get in giving punishment, Abe, and also, Abe, he would have avoided getting called a slacker by some of them prize-fight fans, who seemed to be sore that Willard should have quit after losing only half his teeth and having still another eye to see with, the right one being blinded in the first round, Abe."

"Well, the chances is that when Willard goes

to consult a doctor, which he would probably have to do after the licking he got, Mawruss," Abe said, "before he would get the opportunity to tell the doctor that he had been in a prize-fight, the doctor will give one look at him and lay the whole trouble to abscesses at the roots of the teeth, and he will order Willard to go and have the rest of them drawn right away, so he might just as well have stayed one more round and let Dempsey finish the job. Also, Mawruss, them fight fans *oser* cared whether Willard had served in the army or not. Willard was the loser, and naturally them Broadway fight fans didn't have no sympathy with a loser, so even if there hadn't been no European war for Willard not to serve in, Mawruss, they would of tried to think of some other name to shout at him as he staggered out of the ring, like Prohibitionist or League-of-Nationer."

"Of course them fight fans had in a way a right to get sore, Abe," Mawruss remarked, "because a whole lot of them had bet money on Willard to win."

"Sure they did," Abe agreed, "but gambling on the personal injuries of two human beings, even if they do agree of their own will to see how long they can stand such injuries without growing unconscious, Mawruss, is my idea of nothing to gamble about. But I suppose the typical fight fan don't feel that way about it. Probably when some member of his family has got to go through an operation, he wipes away his tears with one hand and makes a book on the result

with the other. He probably offers his friends even money that the party won't come out of the ether, one to two that the party wouldn't rally from the shock, and one to three against complete recovery inside of a month, or he will make a combination offer whereby his friends can play the operation across the board as a two or three proposition, Mawruss."

"And his friends, being also prize-fight fans, will probably take him up," Morris suggested.

"Certainly they will," Abe concluded, "because to a prize-fight fan suffering is not a sight which is to be avoided. It is something which a typical prize-fight fan would take a special train and pay a hundred dollars any time to see."

XXIV

FEEDING THE PEACE CONFERENCERS AND THE HOUSEHOLD

"ANYBODY which don't arrange beforehand what the price is going to be, Mawruss, is never overcharged, no matter how much he gets soaked in the bill," Abe Potash said to his partner, Morris Perlmutter, a few days after the Hotel Crillon filed its claim against the American peace mission for two million francs, "which, if the way the United States government arranged with the management of the Hotel Crillon for the board and lodging of them Peace Conferencers is any criterium, Mawruss, we would got to start a recruiting drive for fifty thousand certified public accountants for service abroad, with a chance to see the wonderful scenery and bookkeeping of France."

"I thought the United States government didn't make any arrangement with the Hotel Crillon before them Peace Conferencers went over, Abe," Morris said.

"That's what I mean, Mawruss," Abe said, "which, when President Wilson made up his mind to send all them experts over to France he sent for Ambassador Sharp and asked him where's a

good place for them Indians to stay, and Sharp told him the Hotel Crillon, and when Mr. Wilson asked him is it a good medium-price place, Mr. Sharp says he shouldn't worry, that Jake Crillon is a good feller and wouldn't overcharge nobody, y'understand, and for to leave it to Jake, and so Mr. Wilson done so, Mawruss, and naturally this is the result."

"Why, what for a bill did the management of the Hotel Crillon put in against the United States government, Abe?" Morris asked.

"They 'ain't put in any bill as yet, Mawruss," Abe said. "This here is only a preliminary claim of two million francs, on account of the loss of regular customers because the hotel has been occupied for such a long time by them American Peace Conferencers."

"Well, wouldn't most of the regular customers come back if the management promised that after them Peace Conferencers went home they would disinfect the hotel and give it a thorough overhauling or something?" Morris asked.

"The question 'ain't been argued as yet, Mawruss," Abe said, "but you'll have to admit that if two years from now a guest of the Hotel Crillon complains to the management of something about his room smelling awful peculiar, y'understand, and if the management should go to work and tear up the floor and overhaul the plumbing, only to find that it's a case of the room not having recovered from an American Jugo-Slob expert holding conferences with the Jugo-Slob delegates

to the Peace Conference in it, understand me, two million francs ain't going to go such a long ways, in especially at the present rate of exchange, Mawruss."

"Perhaps you're right, Abe," Morris said. "Perhaps it is better that a lump sum like two million francs would be charged rather as go into the items themselves, because, for instance, if that American mission to negotiate peace had been staying at the hotel which we stayed at, Abe, a bill would have been submitted like this, Abe:

"MM. American Mission to Negotiate Peace
To Hotel se'Escroquerie et Londres, Dr.
Terms, net cash 300 rooms; 8 baths
Tel.: 6060 Rivoli

March, 1919: To entertaining MM. Orlando and Sonnino, as follows:

Table overturned and following articles broken:	
1 inkstand and mucilage-bottle.....Fr.	24.50
1 table-cover damaged by mucilage..	45.00
Chairs injured as follows:	
1 light chair thrown through window.	58.00
1 heavy chair thrown through window.	85.00
Labor as follows:	
Sweeping up broken eye-glasses.....	2.00
Sweeping up hair.....	3.00
Removing blood-stains from carpet..	4.50
Credit:	
By one unclaimed hat, labeled 'Mike, the Popular Rome Hatter'.....	.20
Total.....Fr.	382.40

and not only would it have given away a whole lot of diplomatic secrets, but the American mission

would also have got to pay a luxury tax of ten per cent. on the hotel's telephone number and a little mistake of a hundred francs in the addition."

"But this here Hotel Crillon was a strictly first-class hotel, Mawruss," Abe said, "and with strictly first-class hotels it's the same in Europe as it is in this country, Mawruss; the rates are so fixed that it ain't necessary for the management to make mistakes in the bill, while the accounting department always figures the overhead so as to include the hotel's telephone number, the number of the guest's room, and, in the case of mountain-resort hotels, the altitude of the hotel above sea-level."

"Well, that's just what I am driving into, Abe," Morris said. "Even when hotel bills are submitted weekly and the management has got his signed checks to show for it, Abe, nobody never realizes that he owes all that money to a hotel, y'understand, and when at the end of the peace commission's tenancy the hotel management sends in its final bill, Abe, there's going to be considerable argument between Mr. Joseph Grew, the secretary of the commission, and all them Peace Conferencers, expert and otherwise, as to who ordered what and when, y'understand, which I see by the newspapers, Abe, that Mr. Grew has already begun an investigation about who authorized the serving of one hundred bottles tchampanyer wine on June 14th, and if Mr. Grew couldn't trace the party which signed for one hundred bottles tchampanyer wine on June 14th, y'understand, what chance does he have of finding out who is

responsible for each and every one of the hundreds of checks with illegible signatures which is bound to show up in the final accounting for such articles as scrambled eggs, bacon, and coffee, which any Peace Conferencers might have signed for, whether his home town was in a dry state or not, Abe."

"And Mr. Grew wouldn't get no sympathy from the President, neither, Mawruss," Abe said, "which, when the morning mail arrives at the White House nowadays just as Mr. Wilson is saying to Mrs. Wilson, '*Some* coffee, mommer!' —because the average American has got to be home from Europe at least a month before a good cup of coffee ceases to become a miracle, Mawruss—it won't take more than two letters from Mr. Grew asking Mr. Wilson does he remember whether at the conference between him, Clemenceau, Lord George, Venezuelas, and Baron Ishii, held in Parlor A on March 22d, did or did not somebody order a rye-bread tongue sandwich and a split of Evian water, and if so to please sign inclosed check for same, *non pro tunc* as of March 22d, 1919, understand me, before the only effect an envelope addressed in the handwriting of Mr. Grew will have on Mr. Wilson is that he is going to throw it unopened into the waste-paper basket without so much as saying, 'I wonder what that *schlemiel* wants from me *now*.'"

"As a matter of fact, Abe, the price of food 'ain't interested Mr. Wilson since a few days ago when he asked Mrs. Wilson, 'How much are we paying now for coffee, mommer?' and Mrs. Wilson says

fifty-eight cents a pound, and Mr. Wilson says for the love of Mike, and then asks what she is paying for eggs, and Mrs. Wilson says at Ginsburg's Economy Market eighty-five cents a dozen, and Mr. Wilson says he would just as lieve have some hash from last night's rib roast, and Mrs. Wilson says she doesn't blame him and so would she, but that they are going to have that rib roast cold for lunch on account Ginsburg is practically *schenking* his customers rib roast for fifty-five cents a pound," Morris said.

"And how did you come to hear about this conversation, Mawruss?" Abe asked.

"I didn't hear about it," Morris replied, "but I presume it took place the morning after the newspapers printed the report of the Federal Trade Commission about the packing-houses, Abe, because a similar conversation happened at my breakfast-table that morning, and I presume it also happened at yours."

"Well, it's time that business men begun to take a little interest in the cost of what they are eating, Mawruss," Abe said. "On account of the increase in the price of food, Mawruss, the business man is now paying more money to all the people which is working for him, except his wife."

"Sure, I know," Morris said, "but the business man which is mean enough to hold down his wife to twenty dollars a week housekeeping money simply because the principle of the closed shop and collective bargaining can't be applied to an American household the way it could to a Turkish

harem, Abe, don't live so well as he used to. Former times when such a man complained to his wife that the chicken was a little tough, y'understand, she used to say, 'What do you want for twenty dollars a week housekeeping money—mocking-birds?' Nowadays, however, the best that such a man has got to complain about being tough is round steak, and his wife now says, 'What do you want for twenty dollars a week housekeeping money—chicken?'"

"And the standard of living for even business men is going down so fast, Mawruss, that next year when such a man complains that the tripe is tough, she is going to say, 'What do you expect for twenty dollars a week housekeeping money—round steak?'" Abe said, "and if them packers goes on trying to control the entire bill of fare from soup to cereals, Mawruss, it would only be a matter of a few years when such a husband is going to complain that the puffed jute is tough, and his wife is going to ask him, 'What do you expect for twenty dollars a week housekeeping money—ensilage?' which, if something ain't done pretty soon to stop dealers boosting the price of food, Mawruss, twenty dollars a week housekeeping money ain't going to feed a family of hearty-eating canary-birds."

"I suppose that in the end, Abe, the business man would be obliged to admit that the high cost of living is just as expensive for his wife as it is for his other employees," Morris concluded, "and, without the formality of a strike, the wives of

business men will be conceded a new wage-scale of from thirty to forty dollars, in place of the old scale of twenty dollars, for a working-week of one hundred and sixty-eight hours, because it don't make no difference if the Senate confirms the League of Nations or not, Abe, married business men will never live up to the clause which provides for an international working-day of eight hours—anyhow, so far as their wives is concerned."

"That ain't the only clause of the Peace Treaty which wouldn't be lived up to, Mawruss," Abe said, "because I see that already the Germans is having their troubles restoring to the British government this here skull of the Sultan Mkwiwa, Mawruss, which, according to Section Eight, I think it is, of the Treaty of Peace, was removed from German East Africa and taken to Germany."

"But the Germans claim that it was never taken from German East Africa, but was buried there, and they misremember the name of the cemetery," Morris declared.

"I know they do, and I couldn't understand their attitude in the matter, Mawruss," Abe said. "Why don't they go to work and send England any old skull, which a skull is a skull, ain't it?—and one skull is just as much like another skull as two pinochle decks with the same backs, and who is going to check them up on it no matter what kind of a skull they send? Besides, Mawruss, the people who had pull enough to get that skull section inserted in the Treaty of Peace is going to be divided into two classes when that

skull arrives in East Africa, *anyway*—namely, those who will throw a bluff that they recognized the skull as the sultan's skull as soon as they laid eyes on it, y'understand, and those who will refuse to concede that any skull is the sultan's skull. There will also, of course, be a large class of East Africans who won't give a nickel one way or the other; so if Germany couldn't find the sultan's skull, let them send England an *ersatz* sultan's skull with a genwine sultan's label on it. They've been doing that sort of thing for years with American safety-razors, American folding-cameras, and American typewriters; why should they now take it so particular with a German East African sultan?"

"Then you think there is something suspicious about the way Germany is acting over this here skull?" Morris suggested.

"I wouldn't call it exactly suspicious, Mawruss," Abe said, "but at the same time I wouldn't put it beyond the Germans that, after the Allies gets through discussing together whether or not the sultan's skull is genwine, they would suddenly awake to the fact that at least two of the million-mark bills which Germany paid over in the indemnity, y'understand, are *not*. So, therefore, my advice to England is, examine the German indemnity carefully, and don't let no returned sultan's skull distract your attention, even if it would be made of plaster of Paris with a round hold on top for keeping matches in it, and on the bottom a sign, reading:

"*Grüss Aus Schveningen.*"

XXV

WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO ABOUT IT? THIS INCLUDES LIBELED MILLIONAIRES, ENFORCED PROHIBITION, AND SHANTUNG

"WELL I'll tell you, Mawruss," Abe Potash said, recently, "I doubt very much if I would be able to say offhand who Arnold Benedict was if I would be asked such a question by a smart lawyer in a court-room full of reporters, which, if they hadn't happened to be there at that particular moment, would of probably gone to their graves without even the faintest suspicion that you didn't spell *ignorant idealist* with two l's, y'understand."

"Still, Abe, you've got to admit that plaintiff in a libel suit don't deserve much sympathy if he don't post himself before going on the stand as to the meaning of the libel, so as to anyhow be able to say that it *was* a libel and not a compliment, understand me," Morris said.

"He took his lawyers' word for it that it was a libel, Mawruss," Abe said, "and, anyhow, Mawruss, nobody has got a right to call anybody an ignorant philantropist even, no matter how ignorant such a philantropist might be about what the word philantropist would mean."

"And do you *know* what it means?" Morris asked.

"A philantropist is a feller who gives big sums of moneys to orphan-asylums, hospitals, and colleges, and if he could afford it he's a philantropist, Mawruss, and if he couldn't, then he's a sucker, and that is what is called a philantropist," Abe said, "which, if I didn't know what it meant, Mawruss, I ain't such an ignorant idealist that I would use such a word in front of you and expect you not to try to trip me up on it."

"I see you've also been looking up what ignorant idealist means," Morris observed.

"And I ain't very peculiar that way, neither, Mawruss," Abe admitted, "because I bet yer that in the last two days at least five million people has been looking up in the dictionary what that word idealist means and not knowing even *then* what it means, y'understand, and still that 'ain't prevented them from knocking Mr. Ford, Mawruss."

"But the fact remains, Abe, that them five million people ain't suing nobody for calling them ignorant idealists," Morris interrupted.

"Also, Mawruss, they ain't running one of the largest industrial plants in the country on a profit-sharing basis with several thousand employees," Abe declared, "which there is a whole lot of big manufacturers in this country who could go on the stand at a moment's notice and pass a cross-examination with a hundred-per-cent. mark on all them words which you read in them medical

journals you pick up from the doctor's desk in his private office when he excuses himself for a minute to answer the 'phone and which you put down so quick and pretend you 'ain't been reading when he comes back again, if you know what I mean. And furthermore, if these same big manufacturers was elected to the United States Senate to-morrow they could make a speech against doing away with child labor in words of six syllables, y'understand, and would probably make such a speech, because the trouble with most big manufacturers is not that they are ignorant, understand me, but that they ain't idealists, Mawruss."

"Just the same, Abe, a man should ought to know what he don't know and side-step it," Morris said.

"But the way it is in this country, Mawruss, a multimillionaire can't side-step it. The newspapers won't let him, because if he gets a reputation for having made fifty million dollars in the safety-pin business, we would say, for example, and news gets so scarce in the newspapers that somebody starts a discussion about which is the biggest musician, Kreisler *oder* Zimbalist, y'understand, right away the editor sends out reporters to interview the most prominent men in the country as to what their opinion is in the matter, and naturally one of the first men such a reporter would call on is Harris J. Rosenbaum, the Safety-pin King. Now, what is Rosenbaum going to do under the circumstances? Is he going to admit to the reporter that up to date he has been so

busy in his safety-pin plant that he 'ain't had time to post himself as to whether Kreisler and Zimbalist is performers on the trombone *oder* the mouth-organ? *Oser!* He finds out from the reporter that these two fellers has got a piece-work wage-scale for playing on the fiddle of five dollars a note, net cash, and he says that both of them is wonderful fiddlers, y'understand, but that to his mind Kreisler plays with more of the artistic temperature than Zimbalist, or if he doesn't actually say so, y'understand, the reporter goes back to his newspaper and *says* he said so, and the consequence is that when in next Sunday's paper Rosenbaum reads,

KREISLER GREATER ARTIST
SAYS SAFETY-PIN KING,

he not only begins to believe that he did say it, but also that it's funny how a man can go on for years being an expert on fiddle-playing and only find it out by accident, as it were."

"And I suppose that a few months later, on the strength of what he *don't* know about fiddle-playing, Abe," Morris remarked, "Harris J. Rosenbaum, the Safety-pin King, is running for United States Senator and comes pretty near getting elected, too."

"There don't seem to be no reason why he wouldn't be," Abe declared, "because just so long as United States Senators is selected by election and not by a competitive examination, Mawruss,

there will always be a certain percentage of Harris J. Rosenbaums in the United States Senate, which you can't keep millionaires out of public office, if they want to fool away their time in such things, and after all, Mawruss, it ain't having brains which makes a man a millionaire, it's having a million dollars."

"Then you don't blame Mr. Ford for the way he has behaved himself, Abe?" Morris asked.

"Not in the least," Abe said. "Millionaires behave the way their fellow-countrymen encourages them to behave, Mawruss, which to my mind, Mawruss, the only way to learn a millionaire like Mr. Ford his place is not to notice him and, in particular, not to pay no attention to anything he says, and such a millionaire would quick subside and devote himself to the manufacture of safety-pins or the best four-cylinder car for the money in the world, as the case may be, which I see in the paper that the refusal of the United States Senate to confirm the Treaty of Peace looks quite certain to them people to whom the winning of the Willard-Dempsey fight by Jeff Willard looked quite certain, Mawruss."

"Well, to my mind, Abe, them round-robins is right to look into the Treaty and the League of Nations covenant before they confirm them," Morris said. "Also, Abe, you couldn't blame them Senators for getting indignant about the Shantung settlement."

"Personally I couldn't blame them and I couldn't praise them, Mawruss, because, like a

hundred million other people in this country, not being in the silk business, Mawruss, I never had the opportunity to find out nothing about even where Shantung was on the map till they printed such a map in the papers last week, and if you've got to go and look it up on a map first to find out whether you should ought to be indignant or not, Mawruss, you couldn't get exactly red in the face over Japan taking Shantung, unless you are a Senator from the Pacific coast, where people have got such a wonderful color in their cheeks that Easterners think it's the climate, when, as a matter of fact, it is thinking about Japanese unrestricted immigration that does it."

"But the Senators represents the people which elects them, Abe," Morris said, "and if it don't take much to make a Californian indignant about any little thing he suspects Japan is doing, y'understand, then Senator Hiram Johnson has got a right to go 'round looking permanently purple over this here Shantung affair. As for the other Senators, Abe, the theory on which they talk each other deaf, dumb, and blind is that they are doing a job which it is impossible for the hundred million people of this country to do for themselves. They are saving their constituents the trouble of leaving their homes and spending a lot of time on government-controlled railroads, going to and from Washington to make their own laws, y'understand. That is what representative government is, Abe, and if the people of this country couldn't get indignant over what ain't

right in this here Treaty of Peace and League of Nations without working up such indignation by several days' careful investigation of the reasons for getting indignant, then it is up to the United States Senate to get indignant for them, even if the individual Senators has got to sit up with wet towels 'round their heads and strong black coffee stewing on the gas-stove, so as not to fall asleep over the job of letting their feelings get the better of their judgment in working up a six-hour speech which will give the country the impression that it just came pouring out on the spur of the moment as a consequence of the Senators' red-hot indignation about this here Shantung."

"It's too bad that the House of Representatives couldn't be mind-readers like the Senate, Mawruss, and get off indignant speeches about what is making certain sections of the country so indignant, Mawruss, that if their Congressmen is going to really and truly represent them, there would be a regular epidemic of apoplexy in Washington," Abe said, "which I am talking about the enforcement of prohibition, Mawruss."

"For myself, Abe, I couldn't understand why it should be necessary to pass a law to enforce a law," Morris remarked, "because, if that is the case, what is going to be the end? After they pass this here law to enforce the prohibition law, are they going to pass another law to enforce the law to enforce prohibition, or do they expect that this here enforcement law will enforce itself, and

if so, then why couldn't the prohibition law be enforced without a law to enforce it?"

"To tell you the truth, Mawruss, a dyed-in-wool Dry could be as hopeful as a man could possibly be on soft drinks, and in his heart of hearts he must got to know that if Congress would sit from now till the arrival of *Elia Hanov'e* and did nothing all that time but pass an endless chain of enforcement laws, prohibition will never be enforced except in the proportion of 2.75 enforcement to 97.25 violation, anyhow in those parts of the country where the hyphen Americans live and like their beverages with a hyphen in it, because, Mawruss, where a hundred per cent. of the population of a certain district has been drinking beer and light wines since 12 A.M. on Rosh Hashonah in the year one up to and including twelve midnight on June 30, 1919, y'understand, and seeing no harm in it, understand me, not only would an act of Congress fail to change the hearts and conscience of such people, but there could be an earthquake, a cyclone, and anything else which a confirmed Dry would call a judgment on them people, and still they wouldn't see no harm in it."

"Then what is the country going to do to enforce the prohibition law?" Morris asked.

"I don't know," Abe said; "but one thing is certain, you can't change people's habits on and after a certain hour on a certain date by putting a law into effect on such date. You might just so well expect that, if the Senate should confirm

the provision handing over Shantung to the Japanese, all the Chinamen in Shantung is immediately going to open stores for the sale of imitation expensive vases and fake silk embroidery, start factories for the manufacture of phony Swedish safety-matches, and do all the other things which Japanese do so successfully that any reputable business man is willing to take a chance on getting indignant about Shantung without even asking his stenographer to look it up for him."

"But I thought you thought that prohibition would be a good thing, Abe?" Morris said.

"I do," Abe said. "I think brown stewed fish, sweet and sour, the way my Rosie cooks it, is a good thing, but at the same time, Mawruss, I realize that my taste in this respect is supported only by what you might call a very limited public sentiment, consisting of Rosie and me, y'understand, and the rest of the household couldn't stand to eat it at all. So, therefore, when we have sweet and sour fish we cook for the rest of the family eggs or meat, and in that way we have happiness in the home. Now a country is a home for the people in it, ain't it, and the main thing is that they should stick together and be happy, and how could they be happy if even the great majority of the people tells the rest what they should and shouldn't eat or drink?"

"But you admit that *schnapps* is harmful, don't you?" Morris insisted.

"And I also admit that sweet and sour fish ain't exactly a health food, Mawruss," Abe said.

"In fact, you wouldn't believe what a lot of bicarbonate of soda Rosie and me uses up between us after we eat that fish; but even so, Mawruss, after you have said all you could say against that fish, the fact remains that Rosie and me, we like it."

"Well, even if the people do like booze, and it does them harm, I say they shouldn't have it," Morris said.

"I agree with you down to the ground, Mawruss," Abe said. "And I don't care if it is booze or sweet and sour, you are still right; but if sweet and sour fish was prohibited, although the fish and the onions and the sugar and the vinegar which you make it out of *wasn't*, y'understand, and in spite of the law, Rosie and me liked it and wanted to continue to eat it, the question then is and the question is going to continue to be:

"How Are You Going to Stop It?"

XXVI

THE APPROACHING ROYAL VISIT

"I SEE where the King of England, to show his appreciation of what we done it during the war, Mawruss, is going to send his eldest son, the King of England, junior, or whatever his name is, to visit us," Abe Potash said to his partner, Morris Perlmutter.

"Yes?" Morris replied. "Well, why don't the King, senior, come himself?"

"You must think that kings has got nothing better to do with their time than fool it away on ocean steamers, Mawruss," Abe said. "A king of England is a very busy man, Mawruss, which I bet yer right now he is dated up as far ahead as Purim, 1921, laying corner-stones, opening exhibitions, making the speech of the afternoon or the evening, as the case may be, at assorted luncheons, teas, and dinners; trying on uniforms; signing warrants at a fee of two guineas and sixpence—not including three cents war tax—for the appointment of tea, coffee, or cocoa manufacturers as purveyors of tea, coffee, or cocoa to the royal household, y'understand, and doing all the other things which a king does in England and a prominent Elk does in America."

"Well, anyhow, I suppose the King of England, junior, must of done a lot of hard work during the war which makes the King, senior, think that it is time the boy had a vacation."

"*Oser!*" Abe said. "So far as I can make out, the young feller made a couple of tourist's tours of the battle-fields, Mawruss, and maybe helped out once or twice with the corner-stone laying; but otherwise, for all the actual fighting he did, instead of being the King of England's son during the war, he might just so well have been Mr. Ford's son."

"Well, kings, junior or senior, ain't supposed to fight, Abe," Morris said. "The most their countries expects of them is that they should share the privations of their subjects by reducing the cost of running their homes till they are living as economically during war-times as a Texas oil millionaire does during peace-times. There was days together there, in the terrible winter of 1916–1917, when the only dishes which appeared on the tables of European kings, outside of green-turtle soup and roast pheasant, was hothouse asparagus and fresh strawberry ice-cream, Abe. The sufferings of kings, junior and senior, during the war 'ain't half been told in the newspapers, Abe."

"The Kings of England, junior and senior, is very popular in England at that, Mawruss," Abe said, "which every week the illustrated papers prints picture after picture of both of them Kings looking every inch kings, or anyhow openers or

better, y'understand; and in fact, Mawruss, the English-reading public never seems to get tired of seeing pictures of building operations, just so long as there is one of them Kings in it laying the corner-stone or turning the first sod of the excavation."

"For that matter, Abe, them brown illustrated supplements to American Sunday newspapers which rubs off so on Palm Beach suits and ladies' white gloves, 'ain't absolutely declared a boycott on kings' pictures, neither," Morris declared. "I suppose that pictures of them Kings with or without Marshal Haig reviewing soldiers and handing out medals is easy worth several hundred dollars a week to the dry cleaners of New York City alone."

"Did I say they didn't?" Abe asked. "Which, considering the trouble and expense this country was put to over the Declaration of Independence, Mawruss, you would be surprised how much interest a whole lot of ladies takes in the English royal family. Here a short time ago the King, senior's, father a brother's daughter got married beneath her to one of the chief stockholders of the Canadian Pacific Railroad, Mawruss, and you would think from the way my Rosie carried on about it that the girl's mother was going round saying what did she ever do that her daughter should go to work and marry a feller that made his living that way, and what a mercy it was the grandmother didn't live to see it; the theory being, Mawruss, that when a king's relation

marries a healthy young chief stockholder with nothing flowing in his veins but the blood of a couple of generations of managing directors, y'understand, it is the equivalence of a bank president's daughter eloping with a professional dancer in a cabaret."

"And when the King, junior, arrives in this country there is going to be a lot of disappointment among them ladies which also gets their pictures printed by the Sunday supplement sitting around cross-legged in ankle-length, awning-striped skirts at dawg-shows, in such a way that even the dawgs must feel embarrassed if they've got the ordinary dawg's sense of decency, Abe," Morris said, "because I see by the paper that the King, senior, has instructed his son that while in New York he should live on board the English battle-ship which is bringing him here so as not to have no truck with any millionaires."

"I suppose the old man thinks that one managing director's child in the royal family is enough," Abe suggested.

"Well," Morris said, "looking at him from the King's standpoint, it will save the young feller's mother a lot of anxiety to know that he is safe on board an English battle-ship every night instead of running around the streets of a country where everybody, up to and including the President himself, is the young feller's social inferior."

"And also, you can't blame the old man if he ain't taking no risks when the young feller gets home and his mother asks him did he have a

good time, that two Right Honorable General Practitioners in Waiting would got to work over her for an hour or so bringing her out of one swoon after another as the result of her son saying, 'I'll *say* I did,'" Abe observed.

"Still, at the same time, Abe," Morris said, "it is going to be a wonderful opportunity for the young feller, even if he gets home again, he would occasionally use the words, '*You've said it,*' instead of '*Quite so.*'"

"But that ain't the idea in the King's sending him over here, Mawruss," Abe said. "The intention is that it is a wonderful opportunity for the American people to see how a king looks and at the same time not have it come off on your gloves. In other words, Mawruss, it's as a favor to us that the young feller is coming over here, and the chances is that his personal feelings in the matter is very much the same as yours or mine would be if we was about to make Sarahcuse, Rochester, Buffalo, Detroit, and Chicago with a line of popular-price garments. We would do it in the course of making a living and not for the education of the thing."

"Then my advice to the young feller and his father is that he should stay home in these times when the building trade is looking up so, Abe, and help out with the corner-stone laying," Morris said, "and give the people of this country a real treat by sending over Lord George or Marshall Field Haig, which while this here King, junior, is a decent, respectable young feller and

his father is also a gentleman that nobody could say a word against no matter if it does cost the English people sixpence in the pound of the ten shillings in the pound which they've got to pay income tax in order that the English royal family should continue to live in the style to which it has become accustomed during the past five hundred years, Abe, still, at the same time, if I could be standing on the curb watching Lord George or this here Haig driving by, it would give me a real thrill to think that I am at last looking at the face of a man who for over four years has been working night and day to put over the biggest thing that has ever been put over in the history of the world, y'understand; whereas, what for a thrill would I get from looking at the face of a man who, putting it big, has been laying as many corner-stones as all the bricklayers' unions in the American Federation of Labor and has been presiding at as many banquets as this here Irving J. Cobb and Gustave Thomas combined?"

"At that, there will be a whole lot of ambulance calls for people who has fainted away in the crowds that will collect to see the King, junior, drive up Fifth Avenue, Mawruss," Abe said.

"I know there will," Morris said; "and if it rested with me, Abe, I wouldn't spend so much as two cents for mathematic spirits of ammonia to bring them to, neither, because them crowds in America is helping along a European idea which we sent across several million American soldiers to wipe out. Them American crowds will

be encouraging European kings to believe that even in America we still think it is all right for the ordinary people of Europe to sacrifice their lives and their property, in order that them corner-stone layers shall cop out the credit."

"As a matter of fact, Mawruss," Abe said, "Mr. Wilson invited the young feller to visit America."

"*Yow*, President Wilson invited him!" Morris exclaimed. "After the experience President Wilson had in Paris staying with the Murats he must have a pretty good idea what it means to be eaten out of house and home by the people that tags along with a king or a president, which I bet yer the most that Mr. Wilson said when he was visiting England last Christmas was that he told the King, senior, if he was ever in Washington to be sure and look him up, or to not to fail to let him know if he was ever in Washington, or that the latch-string was always out at the White House, or any one of the hundreds of things that ordinarily the most inhospitable person in the world is perfectly safe in saying without any one taking him up on it."

"Well, that's where Mr. Wilson made a big mistake, Mawruss," Abe said, "because evidently this here King, junior, couldn't take a joke, y'understand; which, the way it looks now, Mawruss, even if Mr. Wilson had said, 'I hope to see you again sometime,' he would of immediately taken out of his vest pocket such a little book which you put memorandums in it and said

how about August 30, 1919, or would September 10th suit Mr. Wilson better, and that's the way it would of went."

"Anyhow, that's neither here nor there, Abe," Morris said, "because, no matter how many times nowadays Mrs. Wilson is going to ask Mr. Wilson why he couldn't of said good-by, King, and let it go at that, because such people, if you give them the least little encouragement, they would use you like you was running a boarding-house already, understand me, it ain't going to improve matters for Mr. Wilson when the young feller does arrive."

"Say!" Abe exclaimed. "It wouldn't do that King, junior, no harm to rough it a little there at the White House, Mawruss."

"What do you mean—rough it?" Morris demanded. "Don't you suppose the President of the United States eats just so good in his own home as the King of England does in his, Abe? It would be the least of Mr. Wilson's worries if the young feller would expect chicken *à la* king and fillet of kingfish for breakfast, dinner, and supper already, but when it comes to making up a list of the guests which would be invited to meet this here King of England, junior, that is where Mr. Wilson is wise he would get himself run over by a trolley-car or something, and sustain enough injuries to keep him confined to his bed from a few days before the young feller arrives until the morning after the British ambassador successfully slips it to the young feller that the people in

Washington is beginning to wonder if a king of England 'ain't got no home, y'understand."

"But why couldn't Mr. Wilson give one big dinner for the King, junior, to which he would invite the Senate and House of Representatives in a body, and have the whole thing over at one *schlag*, y'understand?"

"Say," Morris said, "the dining-room at the White House is a big place, but it ain't exactly Madison Square Garden, and it ain't even Childs's Boardwalk restaurant, neither."

"Then let him invite them to a series of meals in rotation alphabetically, and let it go at that," Abe suggested.

"Before that would get him out of his troubles and not hold up the confirmation of the Peace Treaty and League of Nations, Abe, Mr. Wilson would first got to get an act of Congress passed amending the order of the alphabet and making L for Lodge, J for Johnson, and R for Reed come ahead of H for Hitchcock, who, of course, wouldn't mind helping out Mr. Wilson by allowing himself to be shifted to the third or fourth sitting," Morris said.

"Maybe it would be a good thing to let the alphabet stand and square things with Borah and Brandegee," Abe retorted.

"It might even be still better if Mr. Wilson would write the King, junior, to be so good and postpone his visit until after Inauguration Day, 1921, and put the entire problem up to the next President, whoever he might be," Morris said.

"He might even be Mr. Wilson," Abe concluded; "because, when it comes to a job like entertaining this here King, junior, what American is anxious to tackle it, even if by doing so he could become President even? Am I right or wrong?"

THE END

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